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SEVENTH SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

*Conversation between Yudhiṣṭhira and Nārada :
Jaya and Vijaya cursed*

The King (Parikṣit) said :

1. How is it that the glorious Lord who is by nature impartial and friendly to all beings, killed Daityas for the sake of Indra, as if He was impelled by partiality, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ?

2. Being transcendental to *Guṇas* (He is above love and hate). He is the very embodiment of perfect bliss. He has no selfish ends to be served from the host of gods, nor does He entertain any fear from Asuras and nor does He cherish any hatred towards them.

3. Oh highly fortunate one, this has been our great doubt about the excellences of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Your Worship should please dispel it.

Śrī Śuka said :

4. Oh great King, you have asked a good question. The life of Hari is miraculous and mysterious. It contains the glories of the devotees of the Lord and promotes devotion unto Him intensely.

5. The legendary story of Hari which is highly meritorious is sung by sages like Nārada and others. After paying obeisance to Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, I shall narrate to you that.

6. Though the Lord who is transcendental to Prakṛti, attributeless, unborn and unmanifest, enters into the *guṇas* of his own Māyā. He assumed the role of the chastiser to those who deserved punishment (i.e. became the cause of enmity between gods and demons).

7. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are the attributes of *Prakṛti* and not of the *Ātman*, nor is there a synchronous increase or decrease of them.

8. During the period of the ascendancy of *Sattva*, he enters into the bodies of celestials and sages, and He thus intensifies their power. During the preponderance of *Rajas*, he does so for Asuras. During the dominance of *Tamas*, he fosters Yakṣas and Rākṣasas. It is in conformance with the Time-spirit that this happens. (Not that God is partial).

9. Like fire (in the wood), space i.e. *Ākāśa* (in a pitcher), he appears in many forms or bodies without being distinguished from the body occupied by him. It is only the discerning who, after meticulous investigation (by introspection) into the *Ātman* as residing in themselves, realize Him (as being distinct from *guṇas* and their products).

10. When the Supreme Self desires to create cities, i.e. bodies, for enjoyment of the *Jīva*, he creates separately *Rajas* (which was in a state of equilibrium) and impels it to act with dominant force. When the Lord desires to sport Himself in multifarious bodies, he makes the *Sattva* act. When he desires to go to sleep, i.e. to withdraw the universe within himself, he sets in motion the *Tamas*.

11. Oh King, this infallible Creator and Controller of the universe, through the instrumentality of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, creates the Present Time which acts as their supporting associate. The entity that is designated as Time, promotes the power of *Sattva*. Due to the fostering of *Sattva* by Time, the Lord of extensive fame, the Controller of Time, appears as a friend of gods (whose dominant characteristic is *Sattva*) and destroys the enemies of gods who are dominated by *Rajas* and *Tamas*. (It is due to his presence that Time has the potency to achieve this).*

12. Oh King, on this very topic was narrated a legend by the divine sage Nārada, when he was respectfully questioned by Yudhiṣṭhira formerly, in the great Rājasūya Sacrifice.

13-14. Having seen the most marvellous absorption of *Śiṣupāla*, the king of Cedi, in Lord Vāsudeva at the great

* VR.: Supreme Soul creates the Present Time which, being pervaded by Him, is like His body. He then brings forth *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*—the sentient and the insentient phenomena. When it is the time for protection through *Sattva guṇa*, the Lord impels the Time to increase the power of gods only and defeat the Asuras who are dominated by *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

sacrifice called Rājasūya the king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu, became astonished in his mind, and asked the divine sage who was sitting there, in the presence of the sages.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

15. Oh, it is extremely marvellous that Śiśupāla, the hater of Vāsudeva was absorbed into Vāsudeva, the Supreme Reality, as such merger is very difficult even to those who are exclusively devoted to Him.

16. Oh Sage, all of us are solicitous to know (the explanation of) this mystery, for Vena who used to revile the Lord was cursed to hell¹ by Brāhmaṇas.

17. The wicked son of Damaghoṣa, Śiśupāla was wrathful and jealous about Kṛṣṇa since his childhood-lisping up to this time. Even so was the wicked Dantavakra.

18. Why is it that the tongue of those who constantly blasphemed Viṣṇu who is the immutable transcendental Brahman, was not affected with white leprosy or that they did not enter the blinding darkness of hell?

19. How is it that they were so easily absorbed into his Lordship of incomprehensible nature, even while all people were looking on ?²

20. This (miracle) confuses my intellect and makes it unsteady like the flame of a lamp flickering before the wind. Your worshipful self should please explain to me the reason of this most wonderful event.

Śrī Śuka said :

21. Hearing that speech (query) of the king, the worshipful sage Nārada was pleased, and addressing to him, he recounted the episodes connected with this event while the members of the assembly were listening

Nārada said ;

22. Censure and eulogy, respectful and disrespectful treatments are meant for this body which is brought forth

1. GS. explains that Vena was killed. He did not go to hell.

2. ŚR. points out that though Dantavakra was not absorbed at that time, his future merger with Vāsudeva was astrologically predicted and is hence treated as a *fait accompli*, by Nārada.

through want of discrimination and ignorance between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, Oh King.

23. By the false notion of identity between the body and the Soul, arises the misapprehension of one's being different from others. It leads to the concept of individual distinctness expressed by the words "I" and "Mine" and (gives rise to) the feeling of pain under punishment and harsh words.

24. The killing of creatures is the destruction of the body which they have identified with the Soul and the notion of individuality (i.e. 'I' and 'Mine'). But the Lord is without a second and the Soul of all. Being absolute, he has no such attachment (or the sense of individuality), he chastises the wicked for their good and not out of malice. How could harmfulness (*Himsā*) be attributed to Him ?

25. Therefore one should concentrate one's mind on Him either through constant hostility or through devotion characterised by absence of malice or enmity or through fear or love. By this concentration, a person will perceive nothing else but the Lord.

26. It is my definite conclusion that just as a mortal being attains identification and concentration with the Lord by cherishing enmity, he does not (with that intensity and to that extent) attain absorption through devotion.¹

27. A worm shut up by a wasp (in its hole or nest) on a wall, broods over it (the wasp) so intensely and continuously through hatred and fear that it gets transformed into a form like a wasp.

28. Thus those who cherish enmity against the glorious Supreme Ruler Kṛṣṇa who appears a human being through his Māyā power, attain to him as their sins are washed off by their constant meditation upon him through hatred or fear.

29. Many persons have attained unto union with the Supreme Lord after being purified of all the impiety by concentrating their mind on the Lord through love, hatred, fear, affection and devotion.

30. Gopīs (wives of cowherds) through love, Kāṁsa through fear, Śiśupāla and other kings through hatred, Vṛṣṇis

1. VJ. & VG. point out that this verse does not advocate hatred as the best form of devotion, though superficially it appears to do so.

through kinship, you Pāṇḍavas through friendship and affection, and we sages through devotion (attained identity with him), Oh King.

31. Vena does not fall under any of the five categories of devotees of the Supreme Man. One should therefore fix one's mind on Kṛṣṇa by any one of the means (detailed above).

32. Oh Pāṇḍava, Śiśupāla and Dantavakra, the sons of your maternal aunt, were the foremost attendants of Viṣṇu; but they fell down from that position through the curse of a Brāhmaṇa.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

33. It appears certainly incredible that those who are exclusively devoted to Hari, were compelled to be born again. Therefore (please tell us) whose curse it was and what was the nature of the imprecation which overpowered the servants of Hari.

34. The residents of the city or region called Vaikuṇṭha are of pure sāttvic form and are devoid of material body, senses and the like. You should narrate to us how it led to the assumption of corporeal existence (in the case of such residents of Vaikuṇṭha).

Nārada said :

35. Once upon a time, Sanandana and others (Sanaka etc.) the sons of Brahmā, went to the region of Viṣṇu, by chance, while they were ranging at will, through the three worlds.

36. Though they were born earlier than elders like Brahmā's sons (such as Marīci and others), they looked like children of five or six years in age. All of them had no garments (and were completely nude). Thinking them to be kiddies those two door-keepers (of Viṣṇu) prevented them (from entering).

37. Being enraged at this, they cursed, "Both of you (doorkeepers) are fools. You do not deserve to live near the feet of Lord Viṣṇu (much less to serve him) as his feet are completely free from *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Hence, immediately turn into the most sinful form of Asuras."

38. While both of them were falling down from their place due to this curse, they were addressed by the merciful sages, "Both of you will be fit to return to your region (Vaikuṇṭha) after three births".

39. Both of them were born as the sons of Diti. The elder was Hiranyakaśipu and the younger brother was Hiranyākṣa. Both of them were respected by Daityas and Dānavas.

40. Hiranyakaśipu was killed by Hari assuming the Man-Lion form. Hiranyākṣa was killed by Viṣṇu incarnating in a boar form while lifting up the earth (sunken into the cosmic waters).

41. Hiranyakaśipu adopted various devices to torture his son Prahlāda to death, as he wished to kill him for his (Prahlāda's) love and devotion to Viṣṇu.

42. Despite his endeavours to kill Prahlāda, he could not do so, as Prahlāda identified himself with the soul of all beings; was serene and looked upon all as being Brahman (and therefore equal). He was also surcharged and covered with Lord Viṣṇu's power.

43. Thereafter, both of them were born as Rākṣasas as the sons of Keśinī and Viśravas. They were Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna, the tormentors of all the worlds.

44. Even in that incarnation, Viṣṇu became Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, and killed them for redeeming them from the curse. You will hear the prowess of Rāma from the lips of Mārkaṇḍeya, Oh King.

45. That very pair was born as Kṣatriya, as the sons of your maternal aunt. Now (not they but) their sins (and their present body, as the consequence of the curse) being destroyed by Sudarśana disc of Kṛṣṇa, they are now rescued from the curse.

46. Both of them were led to absorption in Kṛṣṇa (Acyuta), through their contemplation (of Kṛṣṇa) intensified by the bitterest enmity. They have again returned to Hari's presence, as attendants of Viṣṇu.

Udhīṣṭhira asked :

47. How is it that Hiranyakaśipu came to cherish hatred towards his high-souled beloved son? And how did Prahlāda

happen to devote his mind exclusively to Hari? Please tell me this in detail. Oh worshipful sage.

CHAPTER TWO

Hiranyakaśipu consoles his mother and kinsmen

Nārada narrated :

1. When Hari, who had assumed the form of a boar, thus killed his brother Hiranyākṣa (out of partiality to gods), Hiranyakaśipu was agitated with wrath and grief, Oh King.

2. Trembling with rage, biting his lips, and with eyes fiercely blazing with anger, he looked at the sky which appeared full of smoke; he spoke thus.

3. Looking fierce with his terrible big teeth, frowning look, and terrific looking face with knit eyebrows, he raised his trident in the assembly of Dānavas and addressed them as follows.

4-5. "Oh Dānavas and Daityas, Oh Dvimūrdhan (two-headed demon), Oh three-eyed one, Śambara, hundred-armed one, horse-headed one, Namuci, Pāka, Ilvala, Vipracitti, Puloman, Śakuna and others ! Listen to my words and then immediately execute them. Do not delay.

6. My beloved brother was killed by insignificant enemies through Hari who, though impartial, sided with them through their services (to Him).

7. He (Viṣṇu) was originally pure and impartial but through his assumption of the form of a boar by his Māyā, he has fallen away from his original nature. Like a child, he sides with him who serves him. His mind is unstable.

8. I shall satisfy my brother who is thirsting for blood, with the profuse blood (of Viṣṇu) with his neck cut off by my trident, and thus I shall relieve my grief.

9. When the crafty adversary (whose actions are inscrutable) is destroyed, the residents of heavens (gods) whose very

life is Viṣṇu, will wither away like branches of a tree the roots of which are cut.

10. (While I am accomplishing this), you immediately repair to the earth which has been made prosperous by Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas. Slaughter down those who are engaged in austere penance, sacrifice, Vedic studies, observance of religious vows and acts of charity.

11. Viṣṇu owes his existence to (lit. has for his roots in) the religious performance of Brāhmaṇas, for he Himself is the sacrifice and personified righteousness. He is the ultimate resort of gods, sages, manes and beings.

12. Repair to those regions wherein dwell the Brāhmaṇas, cows, (recitation of) Vedas, (proper observance of the duties of) Varṇas and Āśramas. Devastate that country with fire, and cut down (the trees etc. useful for sacrifice)."

13. In this way, they respectfully accepted the order of their master, bending their heads. Being innately disposed to indulge in harassment of others, they wrought havoc among subjects (on the earth).

14. They set fire to towns, villages, cow-pens, gardens, parks and fields, hermitages and mines, farmers' settlements, villages at the foot of mountains, cow-herd settlements and even capital cities.

15. Some knocked down and dismantled with spades bridges, ramparts and towers. Some with an axe in hand cut down fruit-bearing trees (serving as food to others). Some set on fire the houses of the people with flaming torches.

16. When people were thus constantly harassed by the followers of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of the demons, (sacrifices could not be performed and) gods (who starved due to non-receipt of their share in sacrificial oblations) deserted heaven, and wandered over the earth unperceived.

17-18. (Though himself deeply) aggrieved, Hiraṇyakaśipu offered oblations of water to the spirit of his deceased brother, and performed other funeral rites. He consoled the sons of his brothers, viz., Śakuni, Śambara, Dhṛṣṭa, Bhūta-Santāpana, Vṛka, Kālanābha, Mahānābha, Hariśmaśru, Utkaca.

19. Hiraṇyakaśipu who knew what was appropriate for a particular occasion and situation (lit. place and time), addre-

ssed the following in soothing words to his nephews (mentioned above) and to their mother (his sister-in-law) Ruṣābhānu and to his own mother Diti, Oh ruler of men.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

20. Mother dear ! Oh daughter (-in law) ! Oh sons ! You ought not to lament (the death of) a hero. Praiseworthy and covetable is the death of the brave, while facing the enemy (on the battle-field).

21. The sojourn of beings in this world is like the get-together of travellers in a shed of water-jars (kept on the road-side for travellers to drink), Oh virtuous lady. Similarly, it is by the Providence that creatures are severally brought and are separated by their respective *karmas*.

22.* The Soul is eternal (deathless), immutable, pure, omnipresent, omniscient, the cause of everything, yet distinct from the body, (hence you should not lament for Hiraṇyākṣa thinking him to be dead, separate etc.). Through his *Māyā*, he creates *guṇas* (such as various species of bodies, pleasure, pain) and assumes various forms.

23-24. Just as even the (reflection of) trees (in water appears to) move when the waters move, or the earth appears to revolve when one's eyes are swimming, the same way, when the mind gets agitated and conditioned by the *guṇas*, the Perfect Person appears similarly conditioned and invested with a material body, even though he is bodiless.

25-26. It is the perversity of the Soul to presume its identification with the material body which does not exist. By this identification and attachment, are caused one's union with the undesirable and separation from the dear ones, and *vice*

* As usual, VR. sets forth the Viśiṣṭādvaita theory of the Soul, viz. *Ātman* that is *jīva* pervades the whole body that he occupies (*sarvaṇa*) through his knowledge. To enjoy the fruit of his *karma* (whether merit or sin), he activates the *guṇas* (e.g. *Sattva*). The association of and separation from the body of each *jīva* is due to his *karma*.

But VR. does not explain the get-together and dispersal of several *jīvas* as required by the text of the Bh. P.

VJ. points out that the *jīva*'s relation with his body etc. is temporary, but with that of the Lord is constant. It is the Lord who bestows the *jīva* with the mind, senses etc. Hari is the real support of the *jīva*.

versa, *karmas*, and entrance into various species of beings, birth and death, sorrows of various kinds, lack of discernment and discrimination (between the matter and the spirit), brooding over the (objects of senses), forgetfulness about the discrimination between the Soul and the body.

27. In this context, the wise people give as an illustration, the following ancient legend, in the form of a conversation between Yama (the god of death) and the kinsmen of a dead person. Listen to that dialogue carefully.

28. In the country called Uśīnara, there lived a famous king by name Suyajña. When he was killed in the battle by his enemies his kinsmen stood around him.

29-30. He lay on the battlefield with his armour studded with jewels shattered, his ornaments and wreaths of flowers fallen away from his body. His heart was pierced with arrows and his body lay weltering in blood, the hair of the head dishevelled and scattered. His eyes were blown and lips were bitten with rage. His lotus-like face was covered with dust, and his weapons and arms were cut into pieces.

31. Observing their husband, the king of Uśīnara, reduced to that plight by Fate, the queens were deeply grieved. Screaming out 'We are undone, Oh Lord', they violently beat their breasts with their hands now and then, and fell at his feet.

32. Bewailing loudly and bathing the lotus-like feet of their (dead) husband with tears tinted reddish with saffron paste on their breasts, and their hair and ornaments dishevelled and scattered, they wailed so piteously and loudly as to cause heartrending grief in the hearts of the listening persons.

33. "Alas ! Your majesty has been transported to a stage of existence beyond the range of our sight, by the merciless Destiny, Oh Lord. You who were once the giver of livelihood (and happiness) to the people of Uśīnara country, have now been made the cause of their increasing grief, by it.

34. Oh Lord of the earth ! How can we live without you, our best friend and appreciator of merits ? Permit us who are desirous of serving your feet, to follow you wherever you will go (i.e. to die after you)."

35. While they were lamenting thus clasping their dead

husband, and unwilling to allow him to be removed for cremation, the Sun set in the sky.

36. Having heard the wailings of the relatives of the dead (even while he was in his capital), Yama (the god of death) himself approached them, in the form of a boy, and spoke to them.

Yama said .

37. Oh ! How astonishing is the folly of these elderly people who have been daily observing the course of the world (viz. the death of everyone who is born). Though themselves of the same (mortal) nature as that of the dead person, they bewail in vain the man who has returned to the (unmanifest) state from which he has come (originally).¹

38. Oh ! How blessed-most we are that though abandoned by parents in this world, we do not feel any anxiety. Weak as we are, we are not devoured by (carnivorous animals like) wolves and others. (We feel confident that) he who protects us while (we were) in the womb, shall protect us (in this world).

39. Oh ladies ! The imperishable Lord, at his sweet will, creates, protects and destroys the universe. The wise people call the mobiles and immobiles as mere toys. It is the Lord alone, who is powerful (enough) to preserve and destroy it.

40. Protected by the Lord, one survives even if abandoned by the road side. If ignored by Him, one meets death even while staying at home. A helpless creature can stay alive even in a jungle, if looked after by Him; while a person if destined by Him to die, shall never live even if protected at home (by the use of medicines, incantations etc.).

41. Bodies of all species (including those of gods, sub-human and human beings) come into existence and perish at a particular time according to the *karmas* depending on the subtle body. But the Soul though it inhabits the Prakṛti (the corporal body), is not affected by the attributes of the Prakṛti (body) as he is different from it.

1. Cf. *avyaktādini bhūtāni vyaktamadyāni Bhārata/ avyaktanidhanānyeva tatra kā paridevanā* // B.G. 2.28.

42. This corporal body of Puruṣa (the Soul or Spirit) is caused by delusion, and being made of *bhūtas*, is different from the Soul, just as a house is different from its dweller. Like bubbles constituted of atoms of water, pots made of earth, gold ornaments made of (solidified) fire, this body formed (out of elements) by Time, undergoes modification and perishes.

43. Just as fire remaining latent in the pieces of wood is distinct from them, or the vital breath existing in the body remains different from it, or the sky pervading all things does not stick to anything, similarly the Soul, the supporter of all the *guṇas*, i.e. their product, e.g. the body, sense organs or who dwells in them, is distinct from them.¹

44. You fools ! This (body called) Suyajña whom you are lamenting, is lying here. He who heard you and then replied, could never be seen by you.

45. Not even the great vital air (*mukhya-prāṇa*) in the body which is called life, is the listener or the speaker. The principle, which is the master and controller of senses, is the real *ātman*, and it is distinct from the body and the life-breath *mukhya prāṇa*).

46. This all-pervasive principle *ātman*, though distinct, assumes different bodies (celestial, human and sub-human), consisting of five elements (*bhūtas*), senses and mind, and regards himself as one with them; and by dint of his power and wisdom, he casts them off (as well).

47. So long as its association with Māyā continues, the *ātman* identifies itself with the subtle body (*liṅga-śarīra*) and feels attachment for it. The bondage of *karma* holds sway over him. It leads to the perversion of the Soul, resulting into misery.

48. It is a false notion and attachment to look upon and speak of (products of) *guṇas* (such as pleasure, pain) as real. Like our fanciful desires and dreams, all sense-experience is unreal.

1. According to VJ. verses 41-43 emphasize the distinction of *Param-ātman* from *Jiva*. In 43, the presence of the *Paramātman* in the body is not the effect of delusion, and as such he is not affected by the *guṇas*.

49. Hence, the knowers of the reality do not grieve for what is eternal (the Soul) or what is transient (e.g. body, sense-organs, objects of pleasure). But the nature of those who are given to grieving, cannot be changed (as they have not imbibed the knowledge of reality).

50. A fowler, created as the destroyer of birds (by God) spread his net in the forest, placing allurements at different places.

51. A pair of *Kuliṅga* birds (sparrows) was seen flying over it. Out of them, the female sparrow was soon allured by the fowler.

52. The queen-bird, being dragged by Time (Destiny), was enmeshed in the net. Seeing her in that miserable condition, the male partner was extremely afflicted. The pitiable mate, being helpless (to rescue her and to control his own grief), lamented over his miserable companion, out of affection :

53. "Oh ! What that merciless yet almighty Providence is going to do with my wife, who herself is pitiable and helpless in every respect, is lamenting for me.

54. May the Deity be pleased to take me also. Of what use is to me the survival of the one (male) half leading a miserable life, after being separated from my better half ?

55. How can I maintain those unfledged motherless young ones ? Those unfortunate children of mine must be waiting for the arrival of their mother."

56. While the male bird, who was grieved at the separation from his wife, was thus lamenting with his voice choked with tears, the fowler, as if impelled by fate, concealed himself close by, and hit the bird with an arrow.

57. So, you foolish ladies who do not foresee your own destruction (death) will never get back your husband, even if you bewail for hundreds of years."

Hiranyakaśipu said :

58. While the child was thus admonishing, all the kinsmen (of Suyajña) became astonished, and realized that everything is transient and unreal.

59. Having exhorted them thus, Yama also disappeared at that very spot. The relatives of Suyajña performed his funeral rites.

60. Hence you need not grieve for yourself or for others. In the case of ignorant beings, the differentiation between one's own self and another or what belongs to one's own self and another, is due to the false notion of distinction between one's own self from another (and the consequent attachment for one's own body and property)."

Nārada said :

61. Having heard the speech of the king of Daityas (Hiraṇyakaśipu) Diti, along with her daughter-in-law, immediately stopped sorrowing for her son and steadied her heart by fixing it on Reality.

CHAPTER THREE

Hiraṇyakaśipu's Penance—Brahmā grants Boons

Nārada said :

1. Oh King (Yudhiṣṭhira) ! Hiraṇyakaśipu wished to be invincible, unaffected by old age and death, unrivalled and the absolute ruler of all the worlds.

2. With his arms stretched upwards, eyes fixed in the sky and (all the while) standing on the tips of his big toes, Hiraṇyakaśipu (with the abovementioned desire) performed penance of a severe type, in the valley of mount Mandara.

3. Like the Sun radiating fiery rays at the time of the destruction of the world, he shone with the brilliant splendour of his matted hair. While he was thus engaged in austerities, gods (who disappeared out of fear) returned to their (former) abodes (in heaven).

4. As a result of his (severe) penance, smoky fire emanated from the crown of his head. It spread in all directions

and scorched the higher, middle and lower regions of the universe.

5. Rivers and oceans were agitated; the earth along with its continents and mountains quaked (violently); planets and stars fell down (from their orbits); all the ten directions were ablaze.

6-7 Being scorched (with that fire), gods deserted the heaven and went to the region of god Brahmā, and implored to the creator of the world : “Oh god of gods, Lord of the universe! Being burnt (severely afflicted) with the penance of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of Daityas, we are unable to stay in the Heaven. Oh great god ! If it pleases you, please bring about its pacification (extinction) before all the people (or regions) who worship you, are not destroyed, Oh Supreme Lord !

8. Do you not know his intention of performing this severely austere penance ? (If not) be pleased to listen to it as reported by us.

9-10 ‘Having created this universe of mobiles and immobiles by dint of his penance and Yogic meditation, the creator of the universe occupies his throne (position) exalted over all regions. I too will attain a similar high position for me, by my ever-increasing devotion to asceticism and Yogic concentration. For Time and Soul are eternal.

11. Otherwise, by the power of my penance, I shall reverse the old order of the universe and make it as it was not before (making sins result in happiness, meritorious deeds lead to miseries. The *Asuras* will be exalted to Svarga and gods and sages driven to Pātāla). What have I to do with the positions of Dhruva, Viṣṇu and others which are abolished by Time, at the end of a *Kalpa* ?¹

12. We heard it reported that, it is with that determination, he (Hiraṇyakaśipu) undertook those rigorous religious austerities. Oh Lord of the three worlds ! Now you may please do promptly whatever is proper.

13. Your exalted position as Parameṣṭhī promotes the growth, welfare, prosperity, good fortune and victory of the twice-born ones and cows, Oh Lord of the universe.”

1. The realm of Viṣṇu is eternal. But Hiraṇyakaśipu being of demonic and *Tāmasa* intellect thought it to be perishable.

14. Thus respectfully requested by gods, Brahmā, the glorious, self-originated god, accompanied by Bhṛgu, Dakṣa and others, went to the hermitage of the king of Daityas.

15. But (at first) they could not find him as he was covered with an ant hill, grass and bamboos and as his skin, fat, flesh and blood were eaten up on all sides, by ants.

16. Brahmā (the swan-riding god) was surprised on seeing Hiranyakaśipu tormenting the world with his religious austerities (while lying concealed thus) like the Sun (scorching the world though) covered with clouds. Laughing aloud, he spoke :

Brahmā said :

17. Arise, arise, Oh Son of Kaśyapa ! May good betide you ! You have accomplished the purpose of your penance. I, the bestower of boons, have come here (to confer any boon you ask of me). Ask for any boon desired by you.

18. I have seen your extremely wonderful fortitude and patience. Though your body is eaten up by gnats, your life resides in your bony skeleton only.

19. None of the sages of yore has performed such austere penance, nor shall others do it in future. Who can verily sustain his life without (drinking a drop of) water for a hundred celestial years ?¹

20. By this resoluteness of yours which is hard to practise even by those (great sages) who control their mind, and by your firmness in austere penance, I am conquered by you, Oh son of Diti.

21. I shall bestow on you, Oh leader of Asuras, all the blessings. The sight of an immortal god like me will not be unfructuous and in vain for you (who are but) a mortal.

Nārada said :

22. Having spoken to him (Hiranyakaśipu) thus, the first-born god Brahmā sprinkled on the body (of Hiranyakaśipu) which was eaten up by ants, celestial water from his

1. Human year of 360 days corresponds to 1 day of gods. Thus, one celestial year=360 human years. 100 celestial years=36,000 human years.

Kamaṇḍalu (earthen or wooden water pot) charged with un-failing potency.

23. From the ant-hill covered with bamboos, there arose, like fire from fuel, a youth of adamantine frame of the body, perfect in all limbs, endowed with energy and power, and with complexion like molten gold.

24. Finding god Brahmā seated on his swan, and stationed in the sky, he was transported with joy at this sight, and reverentially touched the ground with his head.

25. Rising up, he saw the god Brahmā with his own eyes. Reverentially he folded his hands in a suppliant position. With his eyes full of tears of joy, and with his hair standing on their ends, he expressed the following prayer with his voice choked with tears of joy.

Hiranyakaśipu said :

26-27.* “Bow to the all-pervading Supreme Lord, the support of the *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, who, being self-luminous, manifested by his own splendour (power), this universe which was enveloped in intense *tamas* (not darkness), produced by Time, at the time of the periodic destruction of the universe (at the end of each *Kalpa*), and who, assuming the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* creates, protects and destroys this universe.

28** Salutations to the Primary Cause (the instrumental cause of the universe who is knowledge and wisdom *incarnate*, and who (as the material cause) becomes manifest through the modifications, viz., vital airs (*prāṇa*), senses (*indriya*), mind and intellect.

29. You govern the mobiles and immobiles through the chief *Prāṇa* (chief of the five vital airs) and hence, you are the protector of all the creatures, the controller of the mind, and

* VR. notes that due to the *tāmāsa* nature of Hiranyakaśipu, he wrongly thinks god Brahmā to be the Almighty Lord. VJ. also points out that the attributes used here are inapplicable to the four-faced god Brahmā but are proper for Hari who, as an *antaryāmin*, dwells in all and controls Brahmā.

** VJ. shows that the attributes mentioned herein are applicable both to the Supreme Lord and to god Brahmā.

life principles, of the heart and the sense-organs. You are the *mahat* (and) as such the ruler of the elements (*bhūtas*), their *guṇas* (objects such as sound, touch etc.) as well as their *vāsanās* (sense-impressions).

30. Through your body consisting of the three Vedas, and the sacrificial lore, requiring four officiating priests (viz. Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Udgātṛ and Brahmā), you perform the seven types of sacrifices (such as *Agniṣṭoma*, *Atyagniṣṭoma*, *Uktha*, *Ṣoḍaśī*, *Atirātra*, *Āptoryāma* and *Vājapeya*). You are the Soul of all living beings. You are indivisible, without a beginning and end, and unlimited by time and place, the Omniscient Indwelling Soul and Controller.

31. You alone are the unwinking Time. You reduce the duration of the life of men by units of time called *lava*, *nimeṣa* and others. You are the immutable Soul, the occupant of the most exalted position, the birthless, all-pervading principle, the supporter and controller of all living beings.

32* Neither cause nor effect, or neither mobiles nor immobiles are apart from you. All the branches of knowledge (viz. Vedas and upa-Vedas) and arts (auxiliaries of Vedic studies e.g. phonetics, grammar, prosody etc.) it, this shining are your forms. You are the great Brahmā containing within egg of the universe. You are beyond (transcendental to) Prakṛti consisting of three *guṇas*.

33** Oh all-pervading Lord ! This gross manifested universe is your body through which you enjoy the objects of

* VJ. points out that the attributes in this verse are applicable to the Supreme Lord and this verse is a eulogy of the Inner Controller (*antar-yāmin*).

“No mobiles and immobiles of the past, present and future can stand outside and unsupported by you. Both the *parā* and *aparā vidyās* abide in your body and are the means of knowing you. You are perfect and beyond the reach of the three stages, viz. wakefulness, sleep and dream.

** This verse sums up both the gross and subtle forms of Brahmā—VR.

VJ. The words *hiraṇya-garbha* etc. show that the universe is Hari's gross form, in which he enjoys supreme bliss and not misery, or pain like *Dasya* (an ordinary man).

As usual VJ. gives two interpretations, one applicable to Hari and the other to Brahmā—

senses, life-breath (vital energy) and the mind, remaining all the while established in your original most exalted state. You are the unmanifest (subtle) *ātman* and the most ancient Supreme Person.

34. Salutation to the glorious Lord who has pervaded the whole of the universe by His infinite, unmanifest form and who is possessed of powers called *cit* or *vidyā* and *acit* or *māyā*.

35. Oh greatest among the bestowers of boons ! If you are to confer on me my desired boons, may my death not take place at the hands of any being created by You, Oh Lord.

36-37. Let me not meet death indoors or out of doors; during night or at day time, by the hand of any other (being created by you) or by means of weapons; let there be no death to me either on the earth or in the sky, either by men or beasts; by gods, demons and big serpents; by beings whether living or dead. Grant me matchlessness in fight and the sole absolute rulership of all embodied beings.

38. (Lastly) confer on me the great position and power you enjoy among all the guardians of the world. Kindly grant me the undiminishing glory and unfailing mystical powers enjoyed by those whose power lies in asceticism and Yoga.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Oppression of Hiranyakaśipu and Description of Prahlāda's devotion

Nārada said :

1. Thus solicited, Brahmā who was extremely pleased with the austere penance of Hiranyakaśipu, granted on him the boons which are very rarely obtained by anyone.

(1) “Oh Hari, you are the most ancient person in Vaikuṇṭha. This gross manifested universe” etc.

(2) “Oh god Brahmā, you are the Soul (*purāṇa*—one bound to the body) The four-faced god who does “not incarnate (*avyakta*)”, the rest as above.

Brahmā said :

2. “My dear child ! These boons that you seek of me are very rarely to be obtained by men. I, however, confer them on you, even though they are very difficult to be secured.”

3. Then the glorious almighty god of unfailing grace, who was worshipped by the king of Asuras, departed while being extolled by lords of creation (*Prajāpatis* like Marīci and others).

4. The demon who was thus blessed with the boons, assumed a resplendent golden body. Constantly remembering the killing of his brother (by Viṣṇu), he cherished hatred towards the glorious Lord.

5-7. The great Asura subjugated and brought under his control all directions, the three worlds, gods, Asuras, the kings of men, Gandharvas, Garuḍa-like birds, serpents, demi-gods (like Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Vidyādharas); (he subdued) sages, Lords of manes (*Pitṛs*), Manus, Yakṣas, *Rākṣasas*, chiefs of *Piśācas*, *Pretas* and *bhūtas* (goblins, evil spirits etc.); having vanquished and brought under his sway all the chiefs of living beings, the conqueror of the universe forcibly usurped the regions (and offices) of the protectors of the world, along with their glory.

8-11. He established himself in the celestial region which was beautified with the charming heavenly pleasure-garden (*Nandana*). He took up his residence in the palace of the great Indra, (which was) constructed by Viśvakarman, as the very centre of affluence, wealth and prosperity of the three worlds (*OR* the abode of the Lakṣmī of the three worlds). There, the flight of steps are built of coral, the pavement consists of precious emeralds, the walls of crystals and the rows of columns were of *lapis lazuli*. The canopies are of artistic workmanship; the seats were wrought with rubies; beddings white as the foam of milk, were fringed with wreaths of pearls; the heavenly damsels (of pearl-like teeth) filling the mansion here and there (everywhere), with the sweet jingling sound of their anklets (*nūpuras*), see the reflections of their faces on the floors of precious stones.

12. In that palace of Mahendra, the mighty, proud yet magnanimous Hiraṇyakaśipu, the vanquisher and the absolute ruler of the world, enjoyed himself. He ruled with a strong

iron hand, making the oppressed gods and others worship his feet respectfully.

13. With the exception of the three gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) all the Lokapālas (guardians of the world like Indra), with tributes and presents in their hands, waited upon him (Hiraṇyakaśipu) who was (always) intoxicated with strong-flavoured wines and had his reddish eyes rolling due to inebriation, yet who was the receptacle of penance, *Yoga*, power and energy, Oh King.

14. Viśvāvasu, Tumburu, I and others (had to) give musical performance in the presence of him who had forcibly established himself on the throne of Mahendra. Gandharvas, Siddhas, sages, Vidyādhara, and celestial nymphs eulogised him, Oh descendant of Pāṇḍu.

15. By his majestic lustre, he alone appropriated the portions of oblations offered in sacrifices with generous sacrificial gifts, performed by persons of various *Varṇas* (classes of society) and *āśramas* (stages in life).

16. The earth with all the seven continents yielded harvest without ploughing (and other agricultural operations). The heaven offered him whatever he desired, and the sky presented him various wonderful objects.

17. Oceans (lit. mines of precious stones) full of salt water, wine, clarified butter, sugarcane juice, curds, milk and nectar-like (sweet) water, along with their wives (rivers falling in them) bore, on the crest of their waves, heaps of jewels.

18. Mountains along with their caverns afforded him pleasure-grounds. Trees bore fruits and flowers in all seasons. Singly he combined in himself all the different functions of Lokapālas (such as showering, burning, evaporating etc.).

19. He who became the sole, absolute ruler of the world after vanquishing all the directions, enjoyed as much as he liked, pleasures dear to him. But having no control over senses, he was not satiated thereby.

20. In this way, a long period (of more than seventy-one *Yugas*) passed. With the imprecation of a Brāhmaṇa (Sanaka) hanging over his head, he became inebriated with

power and pelf. In his arrogance, he violated the injunctions of the *sāstras*.

21. Being extremely afraid of his harsh punishments and stern rule, all the inhabitants of the world, along with their protective deities, sought shelter with the unfailing Lord Viṣṇu, as they got no protection anywhere else.

22. (They prayed) “Salutation to that direction where resides Hari, the Soul and sovereign ruler of the universe—the direction (region) after reaching which, pure and tranquil recluses do not return (to the mundane existence).”

23*. Having thus controlled their minds and meditating over the Lord with concentrated attention, they shed off their sins. Foregoing their sleep and subsisting on air only, they prayed Lord Viṣṇu.

23-A** (Additional verse in VJ.’s text).

24. A voice emanating from no visible form, deep like the rumbling of clouds and completely filling all the quarters of heaven with its reverberations, was heard by them, assuring protection to the righteous.

25. They heard: “Oh foremost among the gods ! Be not afraid. Good betide you all. A sight of myself (as well as the hearing of my voice) is the means to attain all blessings to all creatures.

26. The wickedness and oppression of this wretched Daitya is already known (to me). I shall mete out a suitable pacification (death) to him. Wait till that period.

27. When a person cherishes hatred to gods, the Vedas, cows, Brāhmaṇas, the righteous people, religion and Me, he verily perishes in no time.

* VJ. : In this way, feeling confident in mind that the Lord will protect them and with concentrated attention (thus controlling their external and internal senses) and subsisting on air (and controlling the vital breath—*prāṇa*) and foregoing sleep (thus controlling their bodies), they repeated the following *mantra*.

**A (1) Hail to the Supreme Person endowed with six excellences, who is the Inner Controller of all, Omniscient and extremely merciful, and who is absolute knowledge and bliss incarnate, a resort affording absolute protection.

28. When he (Hiraṇyakaśipu) will maliciously seek to injure his own son, the serene high-souled Prahlāda who cherishes no enmity against anyone, I shall slay him despite his power derived from Brahmā's boons."

Nārada said:

29. Thus assured (addressed) by the Father (and the protector) of the world, the inhabitants of heaven (gods) bowed down to him. With all their anxieties allayed, they returned, deeming that the demon is (as good as) killed.

30. The king of Daityas had four extremely marvellous sons. Prahlāda who was the worshipper of the Exalted Being was preeminent amongst them by his virtues.

31. He was full of reverence to Brāhmaṇas and was possessed of noble character, true to his word, self-controlled, and like Paramātman, he was the best friend and well-wisher of all.

32. Like a servant, he bowed at the feet of noble Souls. Like a father he was kind to the poor and needy. With equals, he was affectionate like a brother. He looked upon his elders as his masters. Though he was highly endowed with learning, munificence, personal charms and high lineage, he was completely free from pride and arrogance.

33. In dangers and calamities, his mind (always) remained unruffled. He cherished no desire for enjoyments, heard (as obtainable in the next world) or seen (in this world), as he regarded them to be unreal. He had controlled his senses, vital airs (the life-breath), body and intellect. He completely controlled his desires and kept his mind calm and serene. Though he was a demon by birth, he was devoid of demonic characteristics.

34. Oh King ! The excellent qualities of the Lord or of his devotees are now and again extolled by the wise. Even now they are not obscured as is the case with the excellences of the Lord.

35. In assemblies, where the discourses on the appreciation of the righteous take place, gods, Prahlāda's sworn enemies, cite him as a model (of piety and righteousness). What to speak about the devotees of Viṣṇu like you ?

36. Prahlāda had a natural love and devotion to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva. Hence it is impossible to describe his innumerable qualities. The description of his nobleness of Soul (and greatness) is only suggestive (and not exhaustive).

37. Even as a child, he set aside his toys. His mind being completely absorbed in the Lord, he appeared as a dunce. As his Soul (mind) was possessed by Kṛṣṇa, as though like a spirit, its coveted treasure, he did not know the matter-of-fact world (as known to ordinary persons, but was full of his presence). (His Soul was completely absorbed in the contemplation of Kṛṣṇa who was his only object of attraction).

38. Being folded in the embrace of Viṣṇu (i.e. finding himself fully identified with the Lord), he was not conscious of his acts such as sitting, walking, eating, sleeping, drinking or speaking.

39. Sometimes his consciousness would get mixed with anxiety for the Lord, and being agitated, he cried. Sometimes he would laugh in the excitement of his meditation about him; sometimes he would sing loudly.

40. Sometimes he shouted at the top of his voice. Sometimes, banishing all the sense of bashfulness, he would dance about. Sometimes, being filled with thoughts about him and feeling absorbed in him completely, he would imitate him.

41. Sometimes, with his hair standing on end, he would sit silent as if (deeply) satisfied with the Divine touch. (as if the Lord manifested himself in his heart and touched him with his hand). Sometimes, his eyes were half-closed and steady, with tears of joy and love flowing out.

42. By the service of the lotus-like feet of Lord of hallowing glory (Viṣṇu) which he acquired while in association with the Lord's devotees who claim nothing as their own, he attained supreme happiness not only to himself but often imparted that felicity to the minds of others which were polluted and miserable by bad company.

43. To his son, who was such a great devotee of the Lord, magnanimous and a highly noble Soul, that Hirāṇyakaśipu tried to do harm, Oh king.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

44. Oh divine sage of excellent vows ! We desire to know from you why the father meted out ill-treatment to his son who was so pure, innocent and righteous.

45. Fathers affectionate to their sons do remonstrate their disobedient sons for the sake of imparting education but never harm any like an enemy.

46. How much less would they do so in the case of such sons who are so obedient, righteous and regard the father as a deity.

Oh Brāhmaṇa sage, be pleased to satisfy our curiosity as to how the hatred of the father towards his son culminated in the father's attempt on the life of his son (or became the cause of the father's death), My Lord.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Life of Prahlāda

Hiranyakaśipu attempts to kill Prahlāda

Nārada said :

1. As is reported, the glorious Kāvya (Śukra) was selected by demons to fill the office of the royal priest. His two sons, Śaṇḍa and Amarka, stayed near the palace of the king of Daityas.

2. They taught the course of studies (in politics and such other sciences) to Prahlāda and other eligible Asura students sent to them by the king, even though Prahlāda was expert in philosophy.

3. Whatever was taught there by the teacher, he (carefully) listened and reproduced it. But he did not approve of the teaching that was on the false notion of distinguishing between (man and man) as friends and enemies.

4. Oh Pāṇḍava, once upon a time, the king of Asuras seated the child on his lap and asked him, "What do you regard as good, my child ?"

Prahlāda replied :

5. Oh Prominent Asura ! To embodied beings who are always mentally harassed with the false notion of 'I' and 'Mine', I regard that it is in their interest that they should abandon the hidden-well-like household which is degrading to the Soul and should enter into the woods and seek shelter with Hari.

Nārada said :

6. Having heard the words of his son which were in favour of the hostile party, he laughed (derisively) and exclaimed : "How the understanding of children gets perverted through contact with others (inimical element) !"

7. Let the child be so carefully guarded in his preceptor's house, that this intellect should not be vitiated by Brāhmaṇas who are the partisans of Viṣṇu *in cognito*.

8. When brought home (from the palace of Hiranya-kaśipu), the royal priests of Daityas sent for him. Praising him in soft words, they enquired of him in coaxing terms and in a conciliatory tone.

9. "Oh child Prahlāda ! May you be happy ! Please tell (us) the truth; do not tell a lie. What caused this perversion of intellect which is beyond (i.e. not found in) boys of your age ?

10. Is this change (distraction) in your mind brought out by others ? Or has it taken place automatically due to your innate nature ?

Prahlāda said :

11. Obeisance to the glorious Lord whose deluding power (Māyā) has created the wrong concept that 'this is mine' and 'this is another's', found in men whose intellect is deluded by Māyā.¹

12. When He is favourable, the beast-like understanding apprehending differentiation that "This is different (from me) and I am different (from him)", comes to an end.

1. VJ. attributes this delusion to the Lord.
"vimohitetyanenā pīvara-kartṛtvaṁ jñāyate /"

13. It is the Supreme Soul which is looked upon as one's own Self and another, by stupid people to whom His ways are inscrutable and indescribable. (It is however no wonder.) Even god Brahmā and other exponents of the Veda, are stupefied when they enquire about his nature. It is that Soul who has changed my mind (and outlook).

14. Oh Brahman ! Just as a piece of iron within the vicinity of a magnet is automatically attracted towards it, my mind, of its own accord (without any ostensible reason), is gravitated to Lord Viṣṇu.

Nārada said :

15. Having spoken (explained) as above, the highly intelligent Prahlāda stopped (speaking). Reproaching him threateningly, the wretched royal servant got enraged (and ordered) :

16. "Who is there ? Bring me a cane. This boy brings disreputation to us. The fourth expedient (corporal punishment) has been prescribed in the Śāstras, in case of such a wickedminded fellow who ruins his family.

17. This boy is like a thorny tree grown in the forest of sandal trees in the form of Daityas. He serves as a handle to Viṣṇu who is (like) an axe cutting the roots of that forest."

18. Intimidating him with various expedients like threats (corporal punishment and others), they made Prahlāda to learn (the text dealing with) the first three objects of human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*).

19. Later on, the teacher was convinced that Prahlāda had mastered (known) the four branches in political strategy (viz. *sāma*, *dāna*, *daṇḍa* and *bheda*). After Prahlāda's mother bathed, dressed and adorned him, he was brought to the presence of the king of Daityas.

20. The Asura (Hiraṇyakaśipu) greeted with blessings his child who lay prostrate at his feet. For a long time he hugged him in his arms and felt deep satisfaction and happiness.

21. Placing him on the lap and smelling the crown of his head, he bathed him with tears. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira, then he spoke to the child of cheerful countenance.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

22. “My dear child Prahlāda ! Please recite some excellent passages that you have learnt well from what your teacher has taught you up to this time, Oh long-lived one !”

Prahlāda said:

23-24. “There are nine forms of devotion to Lord Viṣṇu— (1) to hear the names, episodes etc. of Viṣṇu, (2) to sing of his name and glories, (3) to Remember him (his name), (4) to render service unto him, (5) to worship him, (6) to pay obeisance to him, (7) to dedicate all one’s actions to him, (8) to confide to him as a friend, (9) to offer one’s body and belongings to his service and care. I regard it as the highest type of learning, if one offers himself completely to the Lord and performs this nine-fold devotion¹ (regards complete dedication as the condition precedent of real devotion).”

25. Hearing these words of his son, Hiraṇyakaśipu, with his lips quivering with rage, reproached Śukra’s son (the preceptor’s son) as follows :

26. “You wretch of a Brāhmaṇa ! What does this mean ? Wicked fellow ! You sided with the enemies and disregarding me completely, you have taught some non-sense to the child.

27. There are wicked persons in this world who assume a friend’s garb, but their friendship is treacherous. Their sin (sinfulness) becomes manifest in due time, like the grave diseases of sinners.”²

Preceptor’s (Śukra’s) son said :

28. What this son of yours speaks is not taught by me or by any person. Oh foe of Indra ! It is his innate intelligence ! Oh king ! Please control your anger. Do not lay the blame on us.

1. JG. has given a long but excellent exposition of Bhakti and its nine forms which deserve perusal in the original.

2. ŚR. quotes a *smṛti* text according to which certain types of sinners, e.g., murderer of a Brāhmaṇa, a habitual drunkard, a debaucherous person violating his teacher’s bed have to suffer from heinous diseases ~~and~~ after completing their term in hell. The question is repeated by VQ., VD., GD. and others.

Nārada said :

29. When he was thus replied by (Prahāda's) preceptor, the Asura (Hiraṇyakaśipu) again asked his son : "If this perverted understanding has not been caused by the teaching of your preceptor, whence has it come, you inauspicious boy?"

Prahāda said :

30. (Unswerving attachment and) firm fixation of the mind on Kṛṣṇa does not arise through (the advice of) another, or of one's own accord, or by mutual efforts in the case of those who are firmly devoted to their household (as if it were a sacred vow). Nor (is it engendered) in persons who have not controlled their senses, and who now and again enter the darkness of Samsāra, and who again and again ruminate (repeatedly experience) what they have enjoyed (in former births).

31. They whose heart is polluted (by their attachment to worldly objects) do not know Viṣṇu, to be their (real) objective in life and goal. For they look up for guidance to those who regard the external objects as their aim in life, and are like the blind persons led by the blind. They are tied down (like beasts) with Lord Viṣṇu's long rope in the form of Vedic injunctions prescribing rites to be performed for future good. (These persons are like persons who go to the east in search of an object lost in the west).

32. So long as persons do not seek bath in the dust on the feet of those noble Souls (the devotees of Viṣṇu) who have shed off attachment to worldly objects, the mind of such persons cannot touch (reach) the feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the Lord of long strides as Trivikrama or the Lord of infinite prowess), the object of which is the cessation of *Samsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths and the miseries involved)."¹

33. Hardly did the son (Prahāda) stop speaking, when

1. ŚR. states : Unless one secures the grace of such exalted Souls, the exact implication of Vedānta and the consequent liberation is impossible.

GS. also agrees with this view.

GD. and BP. state that hereby Prahāda suggests that it was through Nārada's grace that he got this spiritual revelation.

Hiraṇyakaśipu with his mind blinded with rage, hurled him from his lap, down to the ground.

34. Overwhelmed with unbearable (violent) wrath, and with eyes reddened with anger, he ordered, "This boy deserves capital punishment. Let him be executed immediately. Oh Nairṛtas, take him away from my presence.

35. This (boy) is verily the murderer of my brother. For this wretched fellow, deserting his own well-wishers, worships like a slave the feet of Viṣṇu, the assassinator of his paternal uncle.

36. Or even to Viṣṇu what good purpose can he serve, I doubt; for even as a child of five, he forfeited his parental affection which is so hard to sever.

37. If beneficial, even a stranger should be treated as a child, like medicine (though the medicinal herbs grow into the forest—outside and away from one's home—they are preserved at home). If a son begotten by one's own self becomes inimical (works against one's interest) he should be treated like a disease. One should amputate that part of the body which is injurious to the body as a whole, if by removing it, the rest (of the body) can live in happiness.

38. Like an uncontrolled sense-organ, in the case of a sage, he is a veritable enemy masquerading as a friend (son). He should be disposed of by all expedients, e.g. administering poison in food, killing him while sitting unguarded or while asleep."

39-40 Commanded thus by their master, the demons with sharp teeth, terrific faces and reddish hair and beard, armed themselves with tridents, and giving out terrible yells and shouting "Cut him, kill him", pierced Prahāda in all the vital parts with their tridents while he was sitting quietly.

41. All their attempts on (the life of) Prahāda proved fruitless and ineffectual, like the pious acts of a person with no past meritorious deeds to his credit; for Prahāda's mind was in communion with the glorious Lord who is the Soul of all beings, the incomprehensible Supreme Brahman.

42. When that attempt was thwarted, the king of demons ~~was~~ alarmed and he persistently devised other expedients to ~~kill~~ Prahāda, Oh Yudhiṣṭhira.

43-44. When the Asura could not kill his innocent son by employing elephants guarding the quarters, great serpents, by use of black magic, by hurling him down from mountain peaks, by using illusive powers (*māyā*), by confining him in dark holes (silos), administering him poison, by starvation, by exposing him to snow, winds, by throwing him in fire and by throwing mountains on him, he was plunged in the deepest anxiety and could not think of any other (effective) measure to kill him.

45. (Hiraṇyakaśipu thought to himself). "This boy has been severely reproached by me now and again. Measures to kill him were also adopted. But by dint of his own power and energy, he has survived unaffected by those tortures and black spells.

46. He is not away from my presence. Though he is still a boy, his mind is not daunted (through my fear). He is so powerful that he will not forget (and forgive) my unrighteousness (and maltreatment) like Śunaḥśepa.¹

47. He is of immeasurable prowess; he entertains fear from nobody as if he is immortal. It is certain that my death will take place by confronting him or possibly it may not (overtake at all)."

48. In this anxious mood, he was sitting with his countenance pale and downcast, when Śaṇḍa and Amarka, the two sons of Śukra spoke to him in private, as follows:

49. "You have single-handedly conquered the three worlds by terrifying all the Lokapālas (guardian deities of the world) by merely contracting your eye-brows. For such a (powerful) Lord as you are, we see no reason for anxiety. The behaviour of children should not be seriously judged as good or bad.

50. Keep him bound down by the noose of Varuṇa so that he should not run away out of fear, till your teacher Śukra returns. A man's understanding may improve with advancement of age and service of the noble ones."

1. This refers to the legend of Śunaḥśepa in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. Śunaḥśepa disowned his father Ajigarta for selling him for sacrifice to Hariścandra and adopted another—Viśvāmitra—gotra.—ŚR.

51. Expressing his assent to the proposals of the preceptor's sons, he ordered, "The duties prescribed for royal householders be taught to him."

52. Oh King ! Then they taught in serial order the details only of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma*, to Prahlāda who was both modest and obedient.

53. (Though taught systematically), Prahlāda did not approve of the teaching of only the first three objects of human life (as mentioned above), as this instruction was meant for those who were interested in pairs like attachment and hatred, and in the enjoyment of objects of senses.

54. When the teacher was not present (at his class) due to some household duties, he was invited by the school-companions of his age who found opportunity for play (and merry-making).

55. Responding to their call in sweet words, the wise Prahlāda, knowing their attachment to him, spoke to them with a smile, out of grace.

56-57. Out of great regard for him, all the boys whose minds were not vitiated by the advice or actions of persons (teachers) who were given to worldly enjoyments and were subject to love, hate etc., set aside all their play-things. With their eyes and hearts fixed on him, they sat round him. The Asura (Prahlāda) who was a great devotee of Viṣṇu and full of compassion and friendship, addressed them.

CHAPTER SIX

*(Prahlāda's Teaching)**

Prahlāda said:

1. In this world, a wise person should (begin to) practise the righteous duties leading to god-realization, since his

* The text of VJ. gives the following additional five verses :

Prahlāda said :

(1) Alas ! You children ! Please listen to my words of advice which will lead to your happiness in every way. Consider (see and

very childhood; for birth in the human species is not easily attained. Even though it (human life) is transient, it alone can help us to achieve the desired object (viz. Liberation).

2. It is, therefore, advisable that a person should approach the feet of Viṣṇu in this very birth as he is the (real) Ruler, Well-wisher and the very beloved Soul of all beings. (Hence one should adopt the course leading to the attainment of his feet.)

3. Oh descendants of Diti ! Being (closely) related to the body, pleasure, like pain, derived from objects of senses, comes to the lot of embodied beings in all species of life (including sub-human beings) through divine dispensation, without any special effort for it.

4. No endeavours, therefore, should be made to seek sensual pleasures, for, that leads to sheer waste of life. Moreover, by such efforts, the *summum bonum*, viz. attainment of the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, is not secured. OR Just as one can attain the Supreme Bliss by resorting to the lotus-like feet of

think) of your friends who are no more. Do not get blind by playfulness and follow a wrong path.

(2) Boys of yore did not lose their minds completely in sports. From the time of their birth (or since their childhood), they were desirous of seeking knowledge about the Supreme Soul and final liberation (*mokṣa*). Whatever has been taught to us by teachers (Śaṇḍa and Amarka, regarding the first three goals of life viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) is not acceptable, inasmuch as it represents wrong objectives (which involves us in *samsāra*) as the desirable aims in life.

(3) If a person who is engrossed in the sleep of ignorance is not wakened up to reality by the precept of a teacher, that precept or doctrine should not be believed, as such a teacher is like a blind person leading other blind persons.

(4) Who is an enemy or an indifferent person or a friend in the case of *Ātman* or my case ? (None). The same is the case with you. What is the propriety of studying politics ? Prosperity and adversity are caused by the Supreme Divine Agency.

(5) Such a person is very rare to be found as does not violate the righteous course leading to the accomplishment of the desire to realize the Supreme Soul—a person who is not under the control of his senses (which are born with him) or his own people (e.g. sons, relatives, friends) and who has transcended his natural (spiritual) blindness and who by following the *Nivṛttidharma* (path of renunciation), becomes proper (eligible) for this as well as the next world.

Mukunda (Viṣṇu) one cannot obtain this Bliss through such efforts for sensual pleasure).

5. Therefore, having fallen into this fear (-ful *samsāra*), a clever person should endeavour to attain that blessed state (of security, viz. *mokṣa*) immediately while one's body is in sound condition and is not yet incapacitated.

6. The span of human life is (limited to) one hundred years only. Half of that life (viz. fifty years) is wasted away in the case of a man who has not subdued himself (his senses and mind); for consigned to (and absorbed in) the blinding darkness of ignorance, he lies asleep at night.

7. (Out of the balance of fifty years) twenty years are lost while he is ignorant in childhood and is absorbed in play in boyhood; and twenty (more) years are wasted when his body is overwhelmed with senility and is rendered unfit.

8. Maddened and (deeply) attached to household life due to the forcible pull of desires (of sensual pleasures) which are difficult to be fulfilled, and under the powerful delusion (of one's ego and belongings expressed by 'I' and 'Mine'), he misspends the remaining portion of his life.*

9. What person who has not conquered his senses can have the power to liberate his own self; who is attached to his house-hold (including wife, children and property) and is tightly bound down with unbreakable ties of love and affection (to them).

10. Who indeed would forego his thirst (passion) for wealth which is dearer than life itself—wealth which thieves (in the house broken by them), servants (while on duty) and merchants (while accompanying their merchandise or cargo) barter in exchange of their life.

11. How can a man renounce his beloved sympathetic wife while remembering his dalliance with her in privacy and her sweet consultation and counsel? (How can one do so)

* 8-A Additional verse in VJ.'s text :

See (take into account) also the conflicts of opinions or quarrels of our householders even though related (to each other)—householders who desire to follow the course of *samsāra* with efforts which are detrimental to the attainment of final beatitude (and not a single moment is left for spiritual progress—VJ.).

with his friends while being tied down with bonds of friendship and with his sweet-lipping children to whom his heart is deeply attached ?

12. Remembering his sons and his beloved daughters (who are staying away in the houses of their fathers-in-law), his brothers, sisters and poor helpless parents, his houses furnished with beautiful abundant furniture, hereditary professions or vocations and his cattle (horses, elephants etc.) and retinue of servants, how can one go away from them ?

13. Like a silk-worm (which gets imprisoned by enveloping itself in a sheath without any outlet), he, due to his unsated desires and through boundless infatuation, goes on performing actions out of cupidity (in the hope of accomplishing them), holding pleasures relating to sex and palate in high estimation.—How can he become disgusted with the world (and renounce all worldly attachment) ?

14. The careless fellow, deeply attached to his family, does not realize that his turn of existence in this world is being wasted away, and that the purpose of his life (viz. attainment of the highest bliss by devotion to God) is being thwarted in his efforts to maintain his family. Though he is afflicted by three types of misery everywhere, he is not disgusted with the world (worldly objects) as he feels that his family is the (source of) delight to him.

15. With his heart always ever set on amassing wealth and knowing full well the punishment meted out here and the consequences of the sin hereafter, the householder of unsubdued senses and with desires unsated, misappropriates another's wealth.

16. Even a person noted for his erudition in scriptures, who is bent on maintaining his family in the manner described above, is not verily capable of realizing his own Self (OR of realizing himself as to who he is and what he is committing etc.). (Then what of you ?) Oh descendants of Danu ! He (even if he be well-versed in *Śāstras*) whose mind is corrupted with the notion of difference between one's own and another's ("mine and yours") enters the dark hell even as an ignorant person.

17. —For the poor fellow whoever he be, who has become

a tool of amusement like a toy deer (or a monkey) for (the entertainment of) lascivious women, and who has forged fetters for himself, in the form of progeny, will not be able to liberate himself at any time.

18. Therefore, Oh descendants of Diti, avoiding from a distance the association with Daityas whose minds are absorbed in (enjoyment of) objects of senses, approach for refuge the most ancient God Nārāyaṇa who is the veritable Supreme bliss (liberation) coveted by recluses who have renounced all association with the world.

19. Being the very Soul of all (mobile and immobile) creatures, and being omnipresent and all-pervading, there is not much trouble and exertion in propitiating the unfailing Lord Viṣṇu, Oh sons of Asuras!

20-21. It is none else than the only one Supreme Soul (Brahman) that the Almighty, immutable Ruler who exists in and pervades the higher and the lower order of beings commencing from the immovables (e.g. vegetations etc.) and culminating in god Brahmā, in all the transformations of elements (the inanimate world of matter or *bhūtas*) in *bhūtas* (gross elements e.g. the sky, the wind), in *guṇas* (like *sattva*) in Pradhāna (the stage in which all *guṇas* are in a state of equilibrium)¹ and in Principles like *Mahat*² (which are evolved due to the uneven mixture of *guṇas*).

22 He, as the Inner Controller (of every being) is the seer, the enjoyer and as such is indicated as 'the pervader'. He is also the object of perception, the objective world enjoyed and is described as 'the pervaded'. He is, however, beyond description, and undifferentiated (though he is spoken of as being different).

23* The Supreme Lord is essentially pure consciousness and absolute bliss. But he conceals his glorious Lordly nature

1. *guṇa-sāmya*—(i) The primordial matter, Pradhāna—ŚR., SD., GD., BP. etc.

(ii) At the time of the Pralaya—VJ.

2. *guṇa-uyatikara*—(i) The evolute *Mahat*—ŚR., SD., GD., BP. etc.

(ii) At the time of the creation of the world—VJ.

VR. puts forward the Viśiṣṭādvaita theory re: God and the world as follows:

The Lord has *Jīva* as his special body and the perceptible inanimate unconscious world as the gross body. Being incomparable, he is One

by his Māyā Power which gives rise to *guṇas*—the creation of the world.

24. Therefore, eschewing out your demonic nature, show kindness and friendliness to all beings, whereby Lord Viṣṇu (God transcendental to sense perception) will be pleased.

25. When the Lord of infinite excellences, the Prime Cause of all, is pleased, what can there be unattainable (to his devotees)? What is the use to us of the objects of human life: Dharma (*artha* and *kāma*) which accrue of their own accord by the product of *guṇas* (designated as Providence, the result of one's past deeds)? Of what attraction is the *Mokṣa* (Final Liberation) which is so covetable to all,—to us who sing of the glory of his feet and taste the nectar-like sweetness therefrom?

26. The triad of the highest purposes of human life, viz. *dharma* (religious merits), *artha* (attainment of wealth) and *kāma* (fulfilment of desires), the spiritual lore, the ritualistic lore, logic, politics and various means of livelihood—I regard all these, the subject matter of the Vedas, as true—only if it serves as the means of offering one's self to the Supreme Person who is the true friend of all. (Otherwise they are meaningless).

27. It is traditionally reported that Lord Nārāyaṇa, the companion of (the sage) Nara, imparted to Nārada this pure and sanctifying knowledge which is so difficult to obtain. It will, however, be attainable to those who have bathed their bodies in the dust of the lotus-like feet of the absolutely devoted votaries of the Lord—votaries who are devoid of all desires except God-realization.

Supreme Being who enters the body to support it but is unaffected by the modifications of the body and hence immutable. The Lord is perfect in his six excellences and he controls the *jīva* according to his *karma*.

VJ. He is within everything an *antaryāmin*, Inner controller. He pervades them from outside, in the form of Time. Under another designation Brahman, he is the one who is indicated both as pervader and the pervaded. He cannot be defined like a material object like a pitcher. Though Omnipresent he is invisible as he is concealed by Māyā or Prakṛti who is the source of Sattva and other attributes so essential for creation.

28. It is from the (sage) Nārada who has realized God that I heard (learnt) formerly this knowledge with the immediate apprehension of truth as well as teaching in the pure course of righteous duties and devotion to the Lord.

Sons of Daityas said :

29. Oh Prahlāda ! You and we do not know any other person except the sons of preceptor (Śukrācārya,) as our teachers, as they have been our masters since our childhood.¹

30. Association with the great (sages) is extremely difficult for a child who is (brought up) in the harem. Please remove our doubt by confiding us with some evidence to give credence to your version, Oh gentle one.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Prahlāda, enlightened while in mother's womb

Nārada continued :

1. When he was thus questioned by the sons of Daityas, the great Asura devotee of the Lord smiled and remembering my teaching, replied to them as follows :

Prahlāda narrated :

2. When our father (Hiraṇyakaśipu) repaired to Mount Mandara to practise religious austerities, the gods made great preparations to wage war against the Dānavas.

3. Indra and other gods began to say thus : "It is really fortunate that the sinful Hiraṇyakaśipu, the scourge of the world, has been eaten up by his own sins, as a serpent is nibbled away by ants."

4. Having heard of the tremendous military preparations of the gods, leaders of Asura forces capitulated when attacked, and fled in terror to all directions.

*1. We who are engaged in our studies are not seeking God—VJ.

5. All of them were so anxious and in haste to save their lives that they paid no heed to their wives, sons, friends, relatives, house, cattles and other belongings.

6. Desirous of total victory, the gods ransacked and devastated the king's palace, while Indra seized the chief Queen, my mother.

7. Fortunately, by a happy chance, the divine sage Nārada arrived there and saw her being carried away on the road while she was trembling (with fear) and crying like a female osprey.

8. Peremptorily he intervened, "Oh Lord of gods ! You should not carry away this innocent woman. Leave her, Oh blessed one, Let go this chaste lady who is the wife of another person."

Indra replied :

9. "There lies in her womb an unbearable force—the seed of the enemy of gods (Hiraṇyakaśipu). Let her stay in my custody till her delivery. I shall accomplish my purpose (by killing the new-born child) and then let her go."

Nārada said :

10. "This (child in the womb) is sinless and an eminent devotee of the Lord. This follower of Ananta is essentially so powerful by his excellences, that he will not meet death at your hands."

11. When addressed thus, Indra respected the words of the divine sage (Nārada) and set her at liberty. He circumambulated her out of devotion to the beloved votaries of the infinite Lord and returned to heaven.

12. Thereupon the sage brought our mother to his hermitage. He consoled her and said, "Oh my daughter, stay here till the return of your husband."

13. Agreeing to that proposal, she, being free from fear (from all quarters) dwelt in the hermitage (lit. presence) of Nārada while the king of Daityas did not return from his terrible austere penance.

14. That pious pregnant lady waited upon the sage with utmost devotion for the well-being of the foetus in the womb and the boon of delivery at any time desired by her.

15. Possessed of that Spiritual Power, the kind-hearted sage granted her both (the boons), and for assuaging her grief and with a view to communicating it to me, he imparted her instruction in the essence of righteousness (viz. devotion unto the Lord) and pure knowledge (regarding the nature of the Soul and the non-Soul).

16. (The memory of) that teaching however faded away in the case of my mother due to the lapse of a long time (that intervened), and also due to her being (after all) a woman. But being specially favoured by the sage, it (the recollection of the precepts) has not left me even up to this moment.

17. If you have faith in my words, even your intellect and understanding will be capable of destroying the (false ego of) identification of the Self with the body etc.¹ Just as that sense has been generated in me through faith, it will appear in the case of women and children as well.

18. Just as, through the agency of (eternal) Time which is capable of bringing about modifications, the six transformations, (viz. birth, existence, growth, ripeness, decay and destruction) are found in the case of fruits of a tree (while they are on the tree which lasts much longer), six modifications beginning with birth are observed in relation to the body (so long as it is associated with the Soul) but not to the Soul (which is eternal and unchangeable).

19. The Soul² is eternal (not subject to creation and destruction), undeteriorating (free from decay), pure (untouched by love, hate etc.), one (without second), the seer

1. *vaiśārādī dhī*—(1) More keen intelligence in grasping the reality—

VR.

(2) Knowledge about God—VJ.

(3) Intelligence directed to God—VC, SD, GD.

2. *ātmā*—VR. takes this as *jīva* (individual soul) while VJ. understands *Paramātmā* (Supreme Soul) by this term and interprets:

VR: This verse describes the essential nature of *Jīvātman* in the liberated stage. As distinguished from the body the *Jīva* is eternal, subject to no deterioration or modifications, untainted by the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*, one as it is of the nature of consciousness running through all bodies, knowing its own body, self-conscious, the support of the body, senses etc., the cause of the movement of bodies (the motive force behind them), all-

(the intelligent subject), the support (of the universe), the immutable, self-effulgent, the primary cause (of the world), the all-pervading, untouched (by anything) and perfect (or uncovered by *Māyā*).

20. With the help of the twelve supreme characteristics mentioned above, the learned person should renounce the wrong notions of 'I and Mine' with reference to one's body and belongings, as the notion arises out of delusion (and ignorance).

pervading through his power of knowledge, unassociated with another *jīva*, and uncovered (with nothing to hide his real nature).

VJ. takes together vv. 19 and 20 and interprets:

(19) *Paramātmān* is eternal by his very nature, suffering from no loss of any member of the body, pure as he is free from the influence of *avidyā*, attachment etc., the Supreme-most and hence the One, knower of the nature of the body, the support of everything else, subject to no modification or change either due to his innate nature or through the influence of others, Self-seeing (Self-conscious of his Brahmanhood), absolutely independent, all-pervading, unattached as he is above *Prakṛti*, not affected (by external forces, not subject to ignorance or other obscuring factors (19).

(20) He who realizes the *ātman* (the Supreme Soul) by these twelve distinguishing characteristics would (automatically) give up the false notions of 'I' and 'Mine' with respect to one's body (and property etc.) caused by delusion and ignorance.

VC. states: For, the purification of oneself is caused by the form of devotion called meditation (*cintana*). The Supreme Soul that is to be meditated is described as follows. VC. here quotes ŚR. verbatim.

SD. explains a few adjectives differently! *Kṣetrajña*—Knowing all (*vyuṣṭi-samaṣṭi*) bodies aggregatively and dis-aggregatively. *āśraya*—the material and instrumental cause for the creation, sustenance etc. of all mobile and immobiles. *Avikriya*—essentially unchangeable but by his eternal powers of mobility and immobility brings about the creation and destruction like the spreading out and withdrawing of the limbs of the tortoise.

SD. contradicts VR. by asserting that this verse does not refer to *jīva* (*jīva-paro nāyam ślokaḥ*).

GD. explains that though the characteristics of *jīva* and *Paramātmān* are different, *jīvātman* is a part (*aṁśa*) of *Paramātmān* and as such there is non-difference between them. This non-difference between the two is implied in this verse. The explanation of the epithets is the same as that of ŚR.

21* Just as a metallurgist specialised in gold extraction out of ore, is able to obtain gold from gold-bearing rocks found in gold-fields, by using the requisite processes (of smelting etc.), similarly a person expert in the spiritual lore (including the causal relations, will be able to attain to Brahmanhood in the fields in the form of the bodies (of different *jīvas*), through the different processes of realizing the Soul (*ātman*).

22. (After analysis of the whole creation and reducing it to fundamental Principles), Teachers of yore (like Kapila and others) have stated that there are eight Prakṛtis (viz. the Primordial matter or *mūla Prakṛti*, *Mahat* (Principle of cosmic Intelligence), *ahamkāra* (ego, I-ness) and five subtle elements, three (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) as their *guṇas* (modes of *Prakṛti*), and sixteen modifications (viz. five gross elements, ten conative and cognitive senses and mind) but the Person or Soul is one, co-ordinating them all.

23. The body is the combination of these all. It is twofold—mobile and immobile. It is here (in the body) that the Soul is to be sought and discriminated, by a process of elimination (viz. This is not the Soul; it is not it).

24. By means of abstract deliberation of the positive and negative concomitance (the omnipresence of the Spirit yet its distinctness from others), by his power of discrimination, and with purified mind and patient reflection over the phenomena of creation, sustenance and the destruction of the universe, that the Soul is to be realized.

25.** The states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep

* (1) VR: The person who realizes the true nature of the Soul as distinguished from the body, not only attains the knowledge of the Supreme-most Person, but realizes the true essential nature.

(2) *adhyātma-vid*—One who is well versed in Vedānta-śāstra with reference to the Soul; realizes in practice the *Sāttvic* virtues; expert in the knowledge about elements.

SD: This verse deals with the knowledge of three Principles viz. non-sentient (universe), the sentient (the Soul) and God who, being different from these, controls them.

SD: It is the God or Brahman who is within all, is to be propitiated by all, through all forms of devotion.

** VJ. takes *buddhi* as *jīva* and interprets: "Guided and prompted by the Supreme Lord, the *jīva* experiences the states of wakefulness etc. The presiding Lord who assumes different forms, e. g. *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prakṛti* is different from *jīva*."

are the functions of the intellect (*buddhi*). He who is cognisant of (lit. experiences) these (three states) is the transcendent person (who is distinct from the body, senses, the mind etc.), the witness (of these all).

26.* Just as one perceives (the presence of) the wind by means of the different fragrant particles with which it is laden, due to the association of those particles with it (in spite of its distinctness from those particles), one should realize the essential nature of the Soul (*ātman*) by the transformations of the intellect which are associated with it, but are repudiated as not being the attributes of the Soul but of the intellect, and are permeated with three *guṇas*, and born of actions or *karmas* (even though due to his association with intellect—*buddhi*—the Soul appears to be characterised by the modification of the *buddhi*.)

27. The *saṁsāra* comes into being through the 'gates' of the intellect (*buddhi*) as it is perpetuated (lit. is fast bound) by the modifications and activities of *buddhi*. It is rooted in ignorance, and as such is unreal. It, however, is regarded as the dream (state) of man.**

28*** Hence you should at the outset, burn down the seed (viz. *avidyā* of the *karmas* which are motivated by the three

* As in v. 25 VJ., interprets *buddhi* as *jīva* and tries to substantiate the *Dvaita* thesis that the *jīva* is different from *Paramātman*. To summarize his gloss: The *jīva* (individual Soul) is different from the Lord who possesses three forms viz., *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña*. He directs the three states (e.g. wakefulness, dream and deep sleep). The three states and their *guṇas* characterised by the colours white, black and yellow distinguish the grades of *jīvas*. To the ignorant, the Lord seems like a *jīva*. But the intelligent people (*prājñajanāḥ*) perceive him to be the same consciousness and the bliss incarnate.

** The text of VJ. gives the following additional verse:

As all the actions are created by the mind and are of momentary nature, they resemble the things in dream and wakeful states. They cause grief, delusion and fear to the person experiencing them (which would not have happened had they been unreal).

*** According to VR. the seed of *karmas* is 'the mistake of the body for the Soul'. The way to burn down this seed is to put an end to the stream of *buddhi*.

guṇas. This causes the cessation of the functioning (lit. current) of *buddhi*. (This is) *Yoga*—the way of merger with the Lord.

29. Out of the thousands of expedients (for annihilating the seed of *karmas*), the one specifically inculcated by the venerable sage Nārada is the proper performance of the acts which will automatically generate deep love and devotion directly unto the Supreme Lord.

30-31. (This is achieved) by rendering devout service to the preceptor (or by a sincere desire to listen devoutly to the teaching of the preceptor), by offering all one's earnings to him, by associating one's Self with pious devotees of the Lord, and by propitiating the Lord, by reverential liking for listening to the stories of the Lord, by extolling his excellent attributes and glorious deeds, by meditating on his lotus-like feet and by seeing and worshipping his images.

32. With an implicit belief in the presence of the venerable Supreme Lord Hari in all created beings, one should treat them with due respect at heart, and (as far as possible) offer them their desired objects.

33. In this way devotion unto the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva is practised by persons who have conquered the group of six passions (viz. lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, jealousy) or of six senses (external five cognitive senses and mind—the internal one). It is by (such) devotion that one develops (devotional love) unto the Lord.

34. When he hears (lit. having heard) the accounts of his great deeds, uncomparable attributes (e.g. love towards devotees) and his heroic exploits (e.g. killing of Rāvaṇa) unachievable by others but carried out by him through his incarnations (like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa) assumed by him in sport, he (the devotee) with his hair standing on end through rapturous delight, and in a voice choked with tears, sings loudly with an open throat, shouts and dances.

35. When like a person possessed by an evil spirit, he sometimes bursts out into laughter here and screams out there;

VJ: *Samsāra* is due to wrong identification of the *jīva* with the body or the Lord. To burn down the seed of *Samsāra* the stream of *buddhi* should be directed to find delight into Lord Nārāyaṇa.

now he meditates, now he bows down to the people. Frequently he breathes heavily and with his mind absorbed in *ātman*, losing his sense of bashfulness, he utters loudly, "Oh Hari ! Lord of the Universe ! Oh Nārāyaṇa".

36. (It is) then that a man is set free from all bondages. His mind and body is attuned to the Lord through contemplation over his pastimes and sportive actions. The seed of ignorance and the consequent (latent) desires being burnt down, by the great device of devotion, he attains to Lord Nārāyaṇa (from Whom there is no return to *saṁsāra*.)

37. In the case of embodied beings whose hearts are polluted (with worldly attachment, love etc.), mental communion with Adhokṣaja¹ is the means of breaking the rolling wheel (cycle) of births and deaths. The (spiritually) wise people regard it as the absolute bliss of absorption in *Brahman*. Therefore, you do worship the Lord residing in your heart.

38. Oh children of Asuras ! What extraordinary effort is required in worshipping Lord Hari Who abides in your heart like space, and Who is your own Self and an intimate friend ? What is the good of acquiring the objects of senses which are commonly attained to by all embodied beings ?

39. Wealth, a wife, cattles, sons and others (kinsmen) houses, landed property (or the earth), elephants, treasures, luxuries of life and all desired objects are evanescent. How much pleasure can all these fleeting objects afford to one whose life may cease at any moment ?

40. In the same way, definitely susceptible to destruction are the heavenly worlds which are attained to by performance of sacrifices. They are excelled by others (in merit and affluence). Nor are they unpolluted (as they excite jealousy) —Therefore for the purpose of realizing the Self, do you worship the Supreme Lord with absolute, desireless devotion. For no fault in the Lord has been discerned by the Vedas or the Smṛtis.

1. (i) VJ. reads *adhokṣajālāpam* for *adhokṣajālambham* and states that this verse describes that the narration of and conversation about the glories of the Lord, leads to the bliss of final emancipation.

(ii) ŚR. notes v. 1. *adhokṣajālambham* 'Taking resort to god Viṣṇu.'

41. In this world a person who supposes himself to be learned and wise, many times performs (Vedic, ritualistic and other) actions with the aim of obtaining it (sensual pleasure), but invariably reaps fruit quite contrary to it.

42. The expectation of a person in undertaking the performance of some religious action is for obtaining happiness and release from miseries. But due to this desire or action he who was (full of happiness due to his desirelessness (i. e. before he was possessed with the desire of happiness or the performance of the action) encounters nothing but misery due to his desires.

43. The physical body for (the happiness of) which a man desires to secure objects of enjoyment by performance of actions actuated by motives, is transient and factually belongs to others (as food for carnivorous beasts and birds of prey). It passes away and (again) returns (to the Soul).

44. How much more so must be one's progeny, wives, houses, wealth and such other things (and in the case of kings their) kingdom, treasury, elephants, ministers, servants and relatives—(all of) which are indirectly connected (through one's body) and whom he regards as his own.

45* The Soul himself is an ocean of eternal bliss. To him, of what interest are these flimsy things (enumerated above) which are sure to perish along with the body—contemptible things which appear covetable as *Puruṣārtha* (ideal in life), but which actually lead to undesirable ends (like hell).

46. Oh Asuras ! Consider to what extent can self-interest (pleasure) be derived through sexual enjoyment etc.¹ by embodied beings who have been suffering miseries from their past actions since their conception (in their mother's womb and other further stages of life in this world till death).

47. The embodied being, with his body obedient to his dictates, begins to perform actions (meritorious or sinful) as

* To those who argue that Lord Viṣṇu assumes incarnation in physical bodies for sensual enjoyment, the verse replies: Hari who is by nature consciousness and bliss is not interested in physical pleasures of the *jīva* (individual Soul)—VJ.

1 ŚR. remarks: There is no scope for enjoyment of pleasures under the circumstances.

a consequence of which he extends (builds) a body (of his next incarnation)—(the process continues *ad infinitum*) as both body and *karmas* are promoted through ignorance.

48. Therefore, even though wealth, enjoyment and acts of righteousness (the three *Puruṣārthas*) are easily available to the devotees of Hari as they depend on Hari, you should, without cherishing any desire (for them), worship Lord Hari, your very Soul who is perfectly desireless.

49. The Supreme Ruler Hari, the beloved Ātman, the controller and indwelling Soul (*antaryāmin*) of all beings (whose bodies are) created out of the gross elements (e.g. the earth, water etc.) which (in their turn) are evolved by Him.

50. It is by resorting to the feet of Mukunda (Lord Viṣṇu) that a god, an *asura* (a demon), a human being, a *yakṣa* or a *gandharva*—whoever he be—becomes blessed like us.

51-52. Oh Asura boys ! It is not the (eminence of) birth as a member of the twice-born family or as a god or as a sage that is sufficient for the propitiation of Hari. Neither righteous conduct, nor extensive knowledge nor charity nor penance, or performance of sacrifices, cleanliness (of body and mind) nor observance of vows is enough for His grace. Lord Hari is pleased through pure (unalloyed) devotion. All the rest is sheer mockery.

53. Hence, Oh descendants of Danu, you focus your devotion on the Almighty Lord Hari who is the Soul of all created beings, by considering everything else as (dear as) your own selves.

54. (Through such devotion) the descendants of Diti (demons), Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, women, Śūdras (low caste people), cowherds (like Ābhīras etc.), birds, beasts and even sinful *jīvas* have attained to immortality (the self-same nature as Acyuta).

55. Unswerving absolute devotion to Govinda (Lord Viṣṇu) which requires viewing His presence in and regard for every creature (mobile or immobile)—this alone has been enunciated in the *Śāstras* as the highest *Puruṣārtha* of man in this world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Death of Hiranyakaśipu and Praise of Nṛsimha

Nārada continued :

1. Now, all the Daitya boys listened to the exhortation of Prahlāda and accepted it due to its faultlessness, but not so the teaching of their preceptors.

2. Thereupon, when the son of the preceptor Śukrācārya observed that their mind was exclusively bent on realization of a single purpose (viz. Lord Hari), he got alarmed and immediately he made a factual report of the state of affairs to the king (Hiranyakaśipu).

3. Hearing that unpleasant and unbearable misdemeanour on the part of his son, the Daitya, with his body trembling under the impulse of rage, made up his mind to finish with his son.

4-5. Severely reprimanding Prahlāda in a harsh language, though he did not at all deserve it, Hiranyakaśipu, cruel by nature as he was, glared askance at him with a wicked look, and heaving heavily like a serpent trodden under foot, he thundered at Prahlāda who, in perfect self-control, stood bent with modesty and with his hands folded.

6. “Oh ill-mannered, stupid wretch, a bane of my family! I shall today despatch you to the abode of Yama, as you have become an obstinate transgressor of my commands.

7. “You stupid fellow ! Relying on whose power did you undauntedly violate my command—I, at whose wrath, all the three worlds along with their guardian deities tremble with fear ?”

Prahlāda replied :

8. He is verily the source of power not only of me, Oh King, but of yours as well as of all other mighty beings. He is that force that keeps under control all creation, high and low, mobile and immobile, beginning from god Brahmā.

9. He is the Supreme Lord, the Eternal Time (—spirit), of mighty strides and of great prowess. He is the very essence of the mental and organic power, courage, intelligence, physical

power and that of sense organs. He is the Supreme Controller of the three *guṇas*. He alone creates, protects and destroys this universe by His potencies.

10. Do you give up this Asura (demonic) nature of yours. Keep your mind equable and serene. There are no (external) enemies except one's uncontrolled mind which goes astray. Know that equipoised mind (looking on friends and foes equably) is the highest form of propitiating the Infinite Lord.

11. Some persons (like you) regard themselves as conquerors of the ten cardinal points, even though they have not, in the first place, controlled the six robbers (viz. five senses and the mind) plundering within. Enemies are born due to one's delusion. How could there be external enemies to the wise who have subdued their mind, and look up all embodied beings as equal.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

12. Oh dull-witted fellow ! It is obvious that you want to court death. You are, therefore, bragging beyond limits. The words of people who are desirous of death, are certainly incoherent.

13* Hiraṇyakaśipu : Oh unfortunate boy ! Where is the Lord of the universe, if there be any other than I ?

Prahlāda : He is everywhere (Omnipresent).

Hiraṇyakaśipu : How is it that He is not seen in this pillar ?

(Prahlāda observes the pillar and bowing down exclaims :)

“Yes, He is seen.”

14. “As you are vaunting too much, I now sever your head from the trunk. Let Hari whom you trust as a protector, save you.”

* Ś.R. treats this as a dialogue between Hiraṇyakaśipu and Prahlāda. Other commentators treat this as the speech of Hiraṇyaka alone. “Where is the Lord of the universe, if there be any other than I ? Oh wretched boy ! If he be omnipresent how is it that he is not seen in this pillar ?” —

15. Thus he repeatedly tormented in rage, his son, a great devotee of the Lord, with reproachful words. (Finding his son gazing at the pillar respectfully with folded hands.) the extremely powerful great Asura, grasping his sword, sprang from his high seat (throne), and knocked the pillar with his fist.

16. Instantaneously there arose in the pillar an immensely terrific crash which rent asunder the shell of the cosmic egg. Hearing the sound as it reached their abodes, god Brahmā and others suspected that to be the time of *Pralaya* when their regions collapse, Oh child ! (Yudhiṣṭhira).

17. Hearing that unprecedented mysterious sound, while proceeding in long strides to kill his son forcibly, he failed to detect within the assembly hall, the source of that crash, at which the leaders of demonic forces were terrified.

18. In order to prove true the utterance of his devotee¹ and to vindicate His (omni-) presence in all creatures and things, He manifested Himself in the pillar of the assembly hall assuming an extremely wonderful form which was neither human nor beastly.

19. Looking (circumspectly) on all sides (for the source of that uncanny roar), he beheld this being coming out from the pillar. (Being astonished, he said to himself:) 'He is neither a beast nor a man. How wonderful is this Man-lion form!'

20. While Hiraṇyakaśipu was musing thus (about the strange figure), there stood before him the extremely terrible form of the Man-lion with his eyes fierce like molten gold, and his face majestic with dazzling hair of his mane.

1. ŚR. applies this expression to all devotees including Prahlāda, Sanaka, Nārada, Hiraṇyakaśipu and god Brahmā. Prahlāda said that Lord Hari was in the pillar pointed out by Hiraṇyakaśipu and he came out of that pillar. Sanaka stated the termination of his curse after three births of Jaya and Vijaya and to fulfil that Viṣṇu incarnated to finish the demonic birth. Nārada's words to Indra about the invincibility of Prahlāda were proved as Hiraṇyakaśipu was not allowed to kill him. Hiraṇyakaśipu's request for the conditions under which he was not to die were satisfied, and god Brahmā's boon to Hiraṇyakaśipu was respected by Viṣṇu in Nṛsiṃha form.

21. He had terrible tusks, a tongue sharp like the blade of a razor, and waving like a sword; his face struck terror with its knitted (frowning) eye-brows; His ears were motionless and erect. His mouth and nostrils were open and amazing like a mountain-cavern. He appeared terrible with his parted jaws.

22. He touched the heavens with his stature. He had a short thick neck, broad chest and slender waist. He was covered with hair white like lunar rays, and hundreds of hands on either side, armed with claws.

23. He was unassailable and he put to flight Daityas and Dānavas with all the choicest weapons peculiar to him (e.g. the Sudarśana disc) as well as to others (e.g. the *vajra*—the thunderbolt).

“Most probably this expedient for my death has been thought out by Hari, the master of the great potency of illusion. But of what avail are his endeavours against me ?”

24. Musing thus to himself, the foremost of (lit. the elephant among) the Daityas, armed with a mace (*gadā*) dashed against Nṛsimha (the Man-lion) with a roar. But just like a moth falling into the fire, the *Asura* disappeared in the effulgent nimbus of Nṛsimha.

25. There was nothing astonishing in the disappearance of the *asura* (the personified *tamas*) into effulgence of *Sattva* incarnate (viz. Nṛsimha) who formerly (at the time of creation) drank up all the *Tamas* (darkness). Then attacking Nṛsimha in rage, the great Asura struck him with the mace of tremendous force.

26. Like Garuḍa seizing a big serpent Nṛsimha (who was the wielder of a mace) caught hold of the Asura along with his mace while he was fighting. While the Asura was being played with by Nṛsimha, he slipped out of his hand like a serpent escaping from the clutches of Garuḍa.

27. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira! Gods and the protectors of all the spheres who were driven out of their abodes (by the Asura) and who concealed themselves behind the curtains of clouds, looked upon this escape as an evil turn (against their interest). The great Asura who freed himself from Nṛsimha's hands,

thought Nṛsimha to be apprehensive of his prowess. Feeling no fatigue in fighting, he armed himself with a sword and shield, and vehemently assailed Nṛsimha again.

28. While the Asura was moving up and down with the speed of a hawk, brandishing his sword and shield, leaving no weak point exposed, Hari roared forth a terrific and shrill peal of laughter, and with great rapidity, seized the Asura whose eyes blinked (by Hari's roaring laughter and dazzling splendour).

29. Just as a serpent would seize a mouse, Hari caught hold of the Asura who, afflicted with the tight hold (of Hari) was trying in every way to escape. At the door (on the threshold) of the assembly-hall, he laid him on his thighs, and though the demon's skin remained unscratched by (Indra's) thunderbolt, He sportingly tore him with his claws as Garuḍa does to the most poisonous serpents. (In this way, all the conditions of god Brahmā's boon were observed while killing Hiranyakaśipu).

30. His indignant and terrific eyes were too difficult to gaze at. He was licking the corners of his wide open mouth with his tongue. His face and mane were reddish due (to the stains of) the drops of blood. (Thus) he resembled a lion wearing the garland of the entrails of an elephant after killing it.

31. Throwing aside Hiranyakaśipu whose lotus-like heart was broken open, with his pointed claws, Nṛsimha who had a number of stout arms, struck down with his claws, weapons and heels, thousands of his (Hiranyakaśipu's) followers who closed on him from all sides with their arms lifted (to strike him).

32. The rain-clouds shaken by (the movements of) his mane scattered away (exposing to gods the full view of the battle below). Being outshone by his dazzling eyes, the lustre of the planets got eclipsed. Tossed by his breath, the oceans became turbulent. Terrified at his stunning roar, the elephant guards of the cardinal points wailed loudly.

33. Overcrowded with the aerial cars which were tossed up by the hair of his mane, the firmament was pushed up (from its original position). The earth got sorely pressed down under his (overwhelmingly heavy) steps. By his velo-

city, mountains were uprooted. Both the sky and the quarters were eclipsed by his dazzling splendour.

34. Then he occupied the excellent throne in the assembly-hall (out of curiosity and wonder at the affluence of his servant — the erstwhile Hiranyakaśipu). The Lord displayed such concentrated effulgence that no enemy remained in sight. Yet his indignation was not abated, and his countenance appeared so terrific that nobody dared approach him.

35. Hearing that the foremost of Daityas, the veritable brain-fever to the three worlds, has been slain by Hari in a combat, celestial women whose faces were blooming with overwhelming joy, repeatedly poured down upon him showers of flowers.

36. At that time, the whole firmament became crowded with rows of celestial cars of gods who were eager to see him. Heavenly drums and tabors were sounded. Prominent Gandharvas sang and their women danced.

37-39. Oh child ! Resorting to that assembly, gods headed by Brahmā, Indra, Śiva and others, sages, manes (*Pitṛs*), demigods like Siddhas, and Vidyādharas, great Nāgas, Manus (who preside over aeons called *Manvantaras*), Prajāpatis (lords of creation), celestial musicians like Gandharvas, Apsaras and Cāraṇas, other demi-gods like Yakṣas, Kimpuruṣas, Vetālas and illustrious Kinnaras and all the attendants of the Lord like Sunanda, Kumuda—all these placed their folded hands to their heads (to pay respects), and from a distance not far from him, severally offered their prayers to the Man-Lion of dazzling splendour, Who was seated (on the throne).

Brahmā said:

40. I bow down to propitiate the Infinite Lord (unlimited by Time, Space etc.) of incomprehensible limitless powers, of marvellous potency and hallowing deeds, who, out of sports, brings about the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe through the instrumentality of the *guṇas*, and yet himself remains undecayed and unchanged.

Śrī Rudra said :

41. The termination of the cycle of one thousand Yugas is the proper time for the exhibition of Your wrath. (If it be against Hiraṇyakaśipu) this puny demon lies slain. Oh Lord who is affectionate to his devotees ! Hiraṇyakaśipu's son your devotee, has approached you. Please protect him (now).

Indra said :

42. Oh Supreme Lord ! (As you are our in-dwelling controller and as such the real enjoyer of sacrificial oblations), in protecting us and securing our shares in sacrifices, it is (really) your own share that you have recovered (from the Daityas). The lotus of our heart, Your own abode, which was (till now) seized with the fear of the demon (and was thus cramped), got bloomed forth by You. Oh Lord ! Of what account is this sovereignty of three worlds which is to be devoured by Time ? To those who wish to serve You, Oh Man-lion, even liberation from Saṁsāra is of little consideration. What of other objectives in human life (like *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*) ?

Sages said :

43. (We pay obeisance to You) Oh Most Ancient Person, You taught us the Supreme form of penance, viz. meditation on Your glory, whereby You evolved this universe that lay latent in You. But it was completely obstructed by this demon. By assuming this form of Man-lion for the protection (of Your devotees), You have permitted us to perform it again, Oh protector of Your refugees.

The manes (Pitṛs) said :

44. This Asura forcibly misappropriated and swallowed up the balls of rice reverentially offered to us by our off-spring at the time of the *Śrāddha* ceremony, and gulped the water mixed with sesamum seeds proffered to us at the time of ablutions in sacred water. We bow to (You) Lord Nṛsiṁha, the Protector of the righteousness, Who (as it were) restored to us those offerings out of the fat of the Asura's belly split open with Your claws.

Siddhas said :

45. We humbly salute You, Lord Nṛsimha, who tore down with your claws this wicked demon who, by the force of his *Yoga* and penance, robbed us of our mystic powers acquired by us through *Yoga*, and was puffed up with pride for his various achievements.

Vidyādhara said :

46. This ignorant fellow, being elated with his physical power and valour, prohibited us the use of our *vidyā* (the power of becoming invisible etc.) acquired by us through Yogic concentration of various types. We ever respectfully bow to You who, assuming, by Your *Māyā* power, the form of the Man-lion, slew him like a beast in the encounter.

Nāgas (serpents) said :

47. Salutations unto You Who brought delight to our women by tearing open the chest of this wicked demon who wrested the jewels from our hoods, and abducted our gem-like beautiful wives.

Manus said :

48. We are Manus, the executors of Your commands. Oh Lord, all the bounds of social order (viz. the duties prescribed for different classes—*varṇas*, and stages in life—*āśramas*) have been violated by Diti's son (*Hiranyakaśipu*). Now that the wicked fellow is withdrawn (killed) by you, Oh Lord, what service should we render unto You? Be pleased to command us, Your servants.

Prajāpatīs said :

49. Oh Supreme Lord ! We, the Lords of creation, are Your creatures. This demon, due to whose restrictions, we could not verily procreate beings, now lies definitely slain with his bosom split open by You. Oh embodiment of pure *Sattva*, Your incarnation itself is auspiciousness for the world.

Gandharvas said :

50. Oh Lord ! We are Your artistes—singers, dancers and actors. He who by dint of his prowess, might and energy

subjugated us to his service, has been reduced to this condition (death) by You. Can anyone straying away from the path of righteousness attain happiness ?

Cāraṇas said :

51. Now that this Asura, the thorn in the heart of the righteous, has been removed (killed) by You, we take shelter under Your lotuslike feet which is the means of emancipation from *Saṁsāra*, Oh Hari.

Yakṣas said :

52. By performing actions pleasing to You, we attained prominence amongst Your followers (servants). But here we were subjected to the position of palanquine bearers by this son of Diti. Being aware of the agony caused by him to the world, You finished with him (lit: reduced him to his five constituent elements), Oh Narahari, the twentyfifth principle (controlling the twentyfour principles¹ responsible for the evolution and involution of the universe).

Kimpuruṣas said :

53. We are (after all) Kimpuruṣas (insignificant beings), but you are the most exalted person, the Almighty Ruler. When denounced by the pious and the good, this wicked fellow was (as good as) dead.

Vaitālikas said :

54. We used to get great worship and respect and wealth by singing of Your pure, sanctifying glory in assemblies and sacrificial sessions. This wicked fellow harshly deprived us of it. We are glad that You have exterminated him like a disease.

1. The following is the usual list of Principles according to Sāṅkhyas: *Puruṣa*, *Prakṛti*, *Mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra* (ego), 5 subtle elements, 10 *indriyas* (sense organs), the mind and 5 gross elements. Out of these *Prakṛti* is uncreated; the seven from *Mahat* are both created and creative; the rest sixteen are created. *Puruṣa* according to Sāṅkhyas is neither created nor creative. (But *Bhāgavata* invests *Puruṣa* with all powers of creation.)

Kinnaras said :

55. Oh Master ! We hosts of *Kinnaras* are Your servants who were forced to labour hard without remuneration by this Daitya. Oh Hari, the wicked fellow is now slain by Your Lordship. Oh Lord Narasimha ! Henceforth You be the source of our prosperity.

Viṣṇu's attendants said :

56. Oh protector ! It is today that we have seen this wonderful half-human and half-leonine form which is an auspicious blessing to all worlds. Oh Lord ! (Now) we know that this (*Hiraṇyakaśipu*) was Your own servant cursed by *Brāhmaṇas* (*Sanaka* and others) and (we realize that) death done to him was bestowal of Your grace (on him).

CHAPTER NINE

Prahlāda eulogizes Nṛsimha

Nārada continued :

1. Thus all gods and others headed by *Brahmā* and *Rudra* dared not go near him who was still possessed (under the influence) of wrath and (hence) unapproachable.

2. The goddess *Śrī* (who always attends upon Lord *Viṣṇu*) was personally sent to his presence. But at the sight of the monstrous manifestation, unseen and unheard of before, she was afraid, and did not approach.

3. God *Brahmā* (ultimately) deputed *Prahlāda* who was standing near-by, (saying), "Oh dear child, you (at least) approach and propitiate the Lord who has been angry with your father."

4. Consenting (to *Brahmā*'s proposal) the child, a great devotee of the Lord, slowly approached him, and folding his palms together, he prostrated himself on the ground before him, Oh king.

5. Seeing the child fallen at his feet, the Lord was thoroughly overwhelmed with compassion. Raising him up, he placed on his head, his lotus-like hand which dispels the fear of those whose minds are fraught with the fear of the serpent in the form of Kāla (Death, Time, the Destroyer).

6. At the touch of his hand, all the inauspiciousness (in the form of impressions left by past actions) in Prahlāda was washed out, and the highest knowledge of the Supreme Brahman instantly dawned upon him. He meditated upon the lotus like feet of the Lord in his heart. Being deeply gratified at heart, the hair of his body stood on their ends (through joy); his heart got drenched (with devotion) and his eyes were overflowing with tears of joy.

7. Fixing on him his heart and eyes with perfect mental concentration and composure, he praised Nṛsimha in inarticulate words in a voice choked with emotion (love).

Prahlāda said :

8. Is it possible that I who belong to a ferocious race (of Asuras), am eligible to praise Lord Hari when hosts of gods headed by Brahmā and others, contemplative sages and wise Siddhas whose minds are constituted of the products of *Sattva* (such as righteousness, knowledge and penance) have not been able, even to this moment, to propitiate him by their streams of prayers, glorifying his many excellences (couched in figurative language.).

9. As the Almighty Lord was pleased with the leader of the elephant-herd¹ due to his (whole-hearted unswerving) devotion (unto him), I presume that affluence, noble lineage, beauty, austerities, learning, keenness of senses, complexion, prowess, physical power, determined exertions, intelligence and the eight-fold process of Yoga are of little avail in propitiating the Supreme Person.

10. I consider that a man of the *cāṇḍāla* (the lowest) caste, who has thoroughly dedicated his mind, speech, deed,

1. This refers to the episode of 'the elephant and the crocodile' described *infra* VIII. 2-4 (Chapters).

wealth and his very life itself to the Lord,¹ is superior to a Brāhmaṇa endowed with the twelve qualities (mentioned in the above verse or enumerated in verses noted below²) but is averse to the lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the lotus-naveled god); for the Cāṇḍāla (devotee) sanctifies his (whole) race but not so the Brāhmaṇa even though he is highly respected³ (by the public).

11. The Supreme Lord is perfect in (the realization of) his blissful nature. Hence he does not expect any respect and worship for himself, from the ignorant (as all of us are before him). He is merciful and therefore he accepts it. For whatever respect (-ful worship) is offered unto the Lord, is returned to the devotee himself, just as the decoration of one's countenance goes to enhance the beauty of the face reflected in the mirror.

12. Therefore, despicable (by birth) as I am, I shall sing of the glory of the Supreme Ruler with all my heart and to the best of my understanding, without any fear or diffidence (about my intelligibility). It is by delineating the glory of the Lord that a man who has entered into *Samśāra* (a product of *guṇas*) due to the influence of Avidyā⁴ (nescience), will be purified.

13. Oh Almighty Ruler ! All these gods such as Brahmā and others who are (now) terrified, are merely the executors

1. VR. brings in the Prapatti doctrine of Rāmānuja herein. He raises the objection that due to the association of *bhakti* (devotion) to Vedānta, only the first three castes (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣātriya and Vaiśya) are eligible for it. The Bh. P. implies *Prapatti* (complete surrender to the Will of the Lord)—here for all people, irrespective of castes and sex.

2. ŚR. and other annotators quote from Sanatsujātiya (in M.Bh.) the following list :

Righteousness, piety (*sattva*), self-control, austerities, non-jealousy, modesty (*hri*), forbearance, tolerance or envylelessness, performance of sacrifices, charity, courage and Vedic-learning—these are the twelve vows to be observed by a Brāhmaṇa.

3. *bhūrimānaḥ* who is puffed up with pride (ŚR., VD., GS., VR. etc.).

4. *ajayāpraviṣṭaḥ*—who has entered into the human body, a product of *guṇas*, due to the force of *prakṛti*—VR.

of the orders of Your Lordship who is a receptacle of pure *Sattva* and not like us Asuras (who are Your inimical-devotees). The sportive activities of the glorious Lord through his beautiful incarnations, are conducive to not only the well being and prosperity of the world but also for the conferment of the blissful experience of Your sports (and not for striking terror).

14. Now that You have slain the demon today, You be pleased to withdraw Your wrath (wrathful attitude). Even a pious man is delighted at the destruction of a scorpion or a serpent. All the people have now attained to peace and tranquillity and are waiting (for the subsidence of Your anger). All the people will remember this form of Yours for deliverance from fear, Oh Nṛsiṃha. (Hence the recollection of Your form being enough, there is no need to continue Your angry mood).

15. (As far as I am concerned), I am not at all afraid of Your (present) form with the most ferocious countenance (with a formidable mouth and tongue), Sun-like dazzling eyes and frightful knitting of eyebrows, fearful tusks and the garland of the entrails (of my father) and the mane and conical ears soaked in blood. Nor (am I afraid of) the roar that terrified the elephants guarding the cardinal points, or of Your pointed claws that tore up the enemy, Oh Invincible Lord!

16. I am (really) afraid of the unbearable miseries involved in the inexorable and terrible cycle of transmigrations (*samsāra*), Oh Lord (who is) compassionate to the miserables. Bound down with (the fetters in the form of my past) actions, I am thrown in the midst of ferocious ones (Daityas). Oh most merciful Lord ! When will You be pleased to recall me to Your feet, which is the sole asylum of all beings and is the Final Emancipation ?

17 Inasmuch as I am being scorched with the fiery sorrows of separation from the dear ones and association with unpleasant situations and persons, during the course of my transmigrations in different types of births (like celestials, sub-human beings), and the so-called cure from miseries entails miseries, I am wandering about in *Samsāra* falsely identifying

me with the body, Oh Almighty Lord ! Be pleased to enlighten me in the remedy (for emancipation from *Samsāra*), viz. the method of serving You.

18. Oh Nṛsiṁha ! I (who am thus enlightened in the way of serving You) shall be completely free from (the influence of) *guṇas* (like love, hatred etc.) and associating myself with the enlightened ardent devotees who resort to the asylum of the pair of Your feet, I shall easily tide over all miseries, singing constantly all the while the marvellously sportive activities of my beloved Friend and the Supreme Deity extolled before by god Brahmā.

19. Oh Nṛsiṁha ! In this world, the parents are not (real) protectors of children. Medicine is not the remedy to the suffering patient (who may succumb to death despite medical care). To a person drowning in the sea, a boat is not a (sure) help (as he may go down with it). In the case of embodied beings who (not being favoured with your grace) are disregarded by you, and are afflicted in this *samsāra*, whatever remedy (against the misery) is regarded as easy, proves to be temporarily effective¹.

20. Whatever agent, whether ancient (like god Brahmā) or modern (like a human father) and possessing a characteristic nature (dominated by *Sattva* etc.) is prompted to create or transform a thing into whatever form, from whatever source and for whatever cause or purpose, irrespective of its time, instrumentality, its relatedness to anyone or its separation from anything else—all these are (identical with) you (and none else).

21. When Māyā, with its *guṇas* (like *Sattva* and others), is prompted into action by the Time-Spirit through the gracious approval of the Supreme Man (who is only) a part of yours, it creates the subtle astral body which is predominated by the Mind. It is evolved out of *karmic* activities. It is unconquerable and is predisposed to the performance of ritualistic Vedic

1. ŚR. alternatively : Is there any easy remedy in the case of those embodied beings who, not being favoured . . . etc.

VR. supports this but to him *tanubhṛtām* = those who are solely devoted to the nourishment of the body.

rites.¹ It is the wheel of *Samsāra* which consists of sixteen spokes (in the form of mind, ten cognitive and conative sense-organs and five subtle elements) offered for *Jīva*'s enjoyment by *Avidyā* (nescience). What person standing apart from you (i.e. not devoted to you) can (hope to) transgress this, Oh Unborn Lord !

22. Oh Almighty Lord ! You have by your inherent power (in the form of consciousness), always kept under perfect control the properties of *Buddhi* or intellect² (such as pleasure, pain, love, avarice etc.) Oh Supreme Controller (of the universe), you are the Time-Spirit who as the director of *Māyā*, exercise full control over the powers of causal relations³. Such as you are, be pleased to take me unto your proximity as I have sought your protection. I have been thrown by the Unborn (*avidyā*) into the wheel (of *samsāra*) of sixteen spokes and am being crushed in it.

23. The people of this world yearn for longevity, affluence and glory of the celestial guardians of different worlds. But, Oh Lord, I have seen how they were swept away by the contraction of my father's eyebrow knitted in wrathful laughter. But even he has been disposed of by you.

24. Therefore, I who know the consequences of the blessings coveted by embodied beings do not seek long life, wealth, glory, sensual pleasure (of anybody) right from those of god *Brahmā*. Nor do I aspire after the mystic powers which are destroyed by You in the form of the Time-Spirit of immense

1. *chandomayam*—Full of desires characterised by mental resolves and suspicions—VJ.

VR. contradicts that the word *chandās* is never used in the sense of desire.

The import of the verse according to VJ. : It is impossible to transgress the wheel of *samsāra* except through the grace of Lord Hari attained through devotion. People of uncontrolled mind find it hard to secure that grace.

2. *ātma-guṇa*—(i) Properties inherent in one's body—VR.

(ii) Birth, death and such other conditions of the body—VJ.

(iii) Properties of *jīva* e.g. pleasure, pain, affection, greed—GD.

All *jīvas* like god *Brahmā* and others and their qualities—SD.

3. *visṛjya-visarga-śaktiḥ*: (i) effects and their means—ŚR.

(ii) *jīvas* and *Prakṛti*—VR.; *jīva* and *Māyā*—SD.

(iii) The world consisting of men, gods etc. and the creation—VJ.

prowess. Do be pleased with me to place me by the side of your servants.

25. Where are the pleasures which are pleasant merely to hear of, but are unreal like the mirage? Where is this body which is the nursery of all diseases? (Such a body is incapable of enjoying the so-called pleasures). The people, however, knowing this all as they do, are too engrossed to quench the fire of desires with drops of honey-like pleasures so difficult to obtain, to get disgusted with this world. (How wonderful is the working of your *Māyā* !).

26. What a world of difference there is, Oh Lord, between me, born out of *rajas* in the family of demons (lit. non-gods) dominated with *tamas*, and your immense grace (towards me) ! You were pleased to place your lotus-like palm graciously only on my head but not on that of gods *Brahmā*, *Śiva* and the goddess *Lakṣmī*.

27. Inasmuch as you are the Soul, well-wisher and friend of the world, this notion of inferiority and superiority which is entertained by ordinary beings cannot be there in your case. But your grace, like the favour bestowed by the wish-yielding heavenly tree, depends proportionately on the service performed. Your grace (leading to righteousness etc.) varies directly as per service rendered to you, and not on the ground of superiority and inferiority.

28. Oh Lord ! This *saṁsāra* is like a well infested with a serpent in the form of birth (and death). People desirous of sensual pleasures are falling into it. Due to the force of association, I was about to fall headlong along with them, but was regarded as his own by the divine sage *Nārada* and (in the way as you favoured me with your grace), was favoured (with knowledge) formerly (while I was in my mother's womb). Thus, how can I possibly give up the service of your servants (devotees) ?

29. When my father, intent upon doing evil, took up a sword and threatened me, "If there be any God other than I, let him protect you while I cut off your head", your act of saving my life and execution of my father was, I think, accomplished to vindicate the word (curse) of the sage (*Sanaka*, *Sanandana* etc.), Oh Infinite Lord.

30.* It is you alone who are (manifest as) this universe. You exist independently (as the cause) of the universe at the beginning before it came into being, and stay as such in the middle (while the cosmos exists), and after its dissolution as well. Having created this (universe which is the) product of (the permutation and combination of) the *guṇas*, by dint of your *māyā*, you re-enter it and appear as many (as protector and destroyer) through them.

31.** Oh Lord ! You are verily none else but this universe consisting of cause and effect. But you are, however, different from it (as you exist independently before the creation and after the destruction of the universe). Hence the notion of distinction between 'this is mine and this is another's, is nothing but an illusion (and as such) unreal. A thing which depends for its creation, destruction, subsistence and manifestation on another is really identical with it, just as a tree (the effect) is the same as the seed (the cause) which is essentially the same as the earth and its subtle cause.***

32. Having withdrawn this universe within yourself by your own agency, and being above desires, you lie on the cosmic waters of the Deluge, absorbed in enjoying your own essential blissfulness, and in perfect rest (inactivity). With your eyes closed in Yogic meditation which transcends sleep by your self-illumination, you stay in the fourth state which lies beyond the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. Therein you neither cognize *Tamas* (the characteristic of deep sleep), nor enjoy any *guṇas* (objects of senses).

* (i) You constitute the entire world consisting of the conscious (individual selves) and the unconscious matter. You maintain your separateness in the beginning, the end and the middle of the universe.—VR.

(ii) The *Śāstras* have conclusively proved your separate existence at the creation, destruction and during the sustenance of the universe—VJ.

(iii) As a matter of fact, *rajo-guṇa* is the creator, *tamoguṇa*, the destroyer, and *sattva guṇa* the sustainer of the universe but (in spite of) your unconcerned entry into them, you are called the slayer (of Hiranyakaśipu) —VC.

** Cf. supra 1.6

*** VR.: Oh Lord ! This world consisting of sentient and non-sentients is yourself as you are the cause of it and are non-different from it. The notion that the individual Soul is the same as the Controlling Lord (*Īśvara*)

33. The universe is the body of Him (i.e. Yours) who through His potency called the Time-Spirit, prompted into action the modes of *Prakṛti* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which combine and create the universe). While He, i.e. You lay in the bed of the serpent Śeṣa on the cosmic waters of the Deluge, and while Your *Yogic* trance was coming to a close, there sprouted forth from Your navel, like a banyan tree from a tiny seed, a large lotus which was (erstwhile) lying hidden in You.

34. The wise seer (Brahmā) who was born of that lotus, did not see anything else than the lotus. Considering that You who were the seed (material cause) pervading his self internally, were outside himself, could not discover You though he immersed himself into the inundatory waters for a hundred years. Oh how can one find out the seed when the sprout shoots forth from it.

35. That self-born god (Brahmā) was greatly astonished (at his failure to discover the 'seed'), Oh Lord. (He reverted to his place). Seated in the lotus and performing austere penance, he got his heart thoroughly purified in due course. He realized You as pervading in the subtlest form, his own Self consisting of *bhūtas* (elements), *indriyas* (cognitive and conative sense-organs) and heart, just as a discriminating person perceives subtle smell pervading the earth.

is unreal, meaningless and is due to *Avidyā*, just as the notion of the identity of the soul and the body is illusory. So is the identification of the Soul with God. That which causes the origination, sustenance, destruction and manifestation of anything is identical with its material cause, just as the divisions of time are not different from the eternal flow of time or the tree is not different from the soil which germinates the seed.

ŚR., VR. etc. interpret *rasu* as subtle elements and *kāla* as the earth, the basis of blue colour etc.

(ii) SD. regards that this verse asserts the difference-cum-non-difference relation between the world and the *Brahman*. That on which the origination, maintenance, manifestation and destruction of a thing depends is both different and identical with it, as a plant is both different and not different from the soil from which it grows.

(iii) GD. emphasizes that this world of causal relationship is identical with the Lord. He is essentially transcendental to the world (*Pra-pañca*). The whole world being the Lord's and identical with him, the notion of difference is unreal.

36. In the same way, Brahmā visualized You as the Supreme (cosmic) person endowed with thousands of faces, feet, heads, thighs, noses, mouths, ears, eyes and decorated with rich ornaments and furnished with weapons. The disposition of Your various limbs was indicated by different parts of the universe (nether world and other regions). You assumed this form by Your *Māyā* power. And he (Brahmā) was filled with great joy.

37. Assuming the form of a horse-necked god, Your worshipful self killed the extremely powerful enemies of the Vedas, Madhu and Kaiṭabha by name who were the very embodiments of *rajas* and *tamas*. You thus restored the corpus of the Vedas to him (Brahmā). The Vedas declare that Your most beloved person consists of pure *Sattva*.

38. In this way, Oh Supreme Person, You incarnate Yourself, as a human or a subhuman being, as a sage or a god, or as a fish and protect the world, and kill the enemies of the people. You uphold the path of righteousness suitable to that particular Yuga (epoch). You remain unmanifest in the Kali age and hence You are designated *Triyuga*.

39. Oh Lord of Vaikuṇṭha ! This mind of mine, vitiated as it is by sins, extroversion, extremely morbid, lustfulness and afflicted with joy, grief and three yearnings (for progeny, prosperity and popularity), finds no interest in Your stories. How can I, a poor wretch with such a mind, contemplate on Your essential nature ?

40. Oh Acyuta ! My ungratified palate drags me in one direction and sexual desire (lit. the genital organ) pulls me to a different direction, while the senses of touch, hearing and the abdomen gravitate me to some other direction. My olfactory sense, the constantly moving eye and faculties of action draw me in different directions—all these pull (in different directions) like a number of co-wives dragging their lord of the house (to their bed-rooms).

41. Be pleased to cast a gracious look at these ignorant people who, as a consequence of their actions, have fallen in the *Vaitaraṇī*¹ in the form of *Samsāra* and are frightened extre-

1. *Vaitaraṇī*—a mythological river bordering on the region of Yama, the god of death. It is full of blood, bones, hair etc. and rushes very rapidly and hence unfordable.

mely with the terror of successive births, deaths and sufferings (from want of food), and who entertain the notions of friendship to bodies whom they consider their own and enmity towards others. Out of compassion for their plight, be pleased to protect them by ferrying them today across the *saṁsāra*-Vaitaraṇī, Oh Lord who stays beyond (*saṁsāra*) !

42. Oh Lord ! You are the father (creator and guide) of all. What exertion could there be in lifting up these ignorant people (from *saṁsāra*) to You who are the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe ? Oh friend of the afflicted ! It is quite meet that the great should verily be gracious unto the ignorant. To us who already serve Your beloved devotees such rescuing from *saṁsāra* is immaterial (as we are sure to be liberated. It is to others that you be pleased to show Your favour).

43. As my mind is immersed in the rare nectar of your prowess, I am not at all afraid of the (so-called) unfordable Vaitaraṇī, Oh Supreme Lord ! I feel grieved for these ignorant fellows who being averse (to this nectar of singing the great deeds of the Lord) carry on the burden of the family etc. in the hope of securing pleasures caused by objects of senses, which again are illusory.

44. Oh Lord, sages, desirous of self-emancipation, generally meditate on you silently in solitude. But they are indifferent to the interests of others. Leaving aside these helpless creatures, I do not long to attain the final beatitude for me alone. Nor do I see any refuge other than you for these, who are wandering in *saṁsāra*.

45. The so-called pleasures of a householder's life such as sexual intercourse and others are positively insignificant, contemptible and leading to a chain of miseries like the scratching of one itching hand with another. Lascivious people though subjected to various miseries, are never satiated (by enjoying the pleasures) in this world. It is only some person endowed with strength of mind and wisdom who (through your grace) (can repress their passion of lust like the temptation to scratch (an itching limb)).

46. Oh Inner Controller ! Means conducive to the attainment of emancipation, viz. observance of the vow of

silence, listening to sacred books, performance of austerities, studies of spiritual texts, discharging one's religious duties, exposition of the *Śāstras*, living in solitude, chanting of the Lord's name and concentration of mind in *Yoga*—all these generally become only the means of livelihood for those whose senses are uncontrolled (and who wish to sell these for worldly gains). In the case of hypocrites it is doubtful whether these might be of any use even for earning the livelihood (as they are likely to be exposed easily).

47. The Vedas have revealed your two symbolic forms, the cause and effect (or the *Prakṛti* and the atoms) which are like the seed and (its) sprout. You are devoid of any form or colour, yet the universe of causal relation is not other than (different from) you. It is by means of the Yoga of Devotion that persons who have controlled their senses, can visualize you directly, both in the cause and its consequence, just as people can perceive fire in (the friction of) the two pieces of wood. Knowledge about you cannot be attained by any other means. (Hence you are pervading everything as its cause).

48. You are (the elements such as the air, fire, earth, sky, water and objects of senses (viz. sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell), the (five) vital airs, the cognitive and conative organs, the heart, the intellect and the Ego (or deities presiding over senses and the mind). Everything possessed of qualities¹ (gross) or devoid of qualities (subtle) is you. There is nothing other than you even if it be conveyed by Mind or Speech, Oh great Lord !

49. Neither these *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) nor the deities presiding over the *guṇas* or endowed with *guṇas* such as *Mahat* and others (viz. *mahat*, *ahamkāra*, five subtle and five gross elements, and ten *indriyas*—cognitive and conative senses) nor the mind etc. nor the various beings including gods and mortals—all these having a beginning-and an end—comprehend you, Oh most highly praised God. It is, therefore, that wise men endowed with high intellect, after careful deliberation (of this) give up the study of the Vedas (and other acts

1. VJ.: *saguṇa*—The *Jīva* in *samsāra*—possessed of qualities and ~~*saguṇa*~~—the emancipated Soul or anything devoid of qualities.

prescribed therein), and worship you alone with concentrated mind.

50. Therefore, Oh most worshipful Lord! How can a person cherish devotion to you who are the goal of the highest order of ascetics (the *parama-haṁsas*), without the (following) six constituents of worship, viz., (1) paying obeisance to the Lord, (2) singing of his glory, (3) offering of all acts to the Lord, (4) waiting on you (worship in the form of service), (5) meditation on the feet of the Lord and (6) listening to the recital of stories of the Lord.

Nārada said :

51. When, in spite of the Lord's transcendence to attributes, the excellences of the Lord were highly extolled with deep reverence and devotion by his devotee Prahlāda, the Lord was pleased with him. Restraining his anger, he spoke to Prahlāda who was respectfully bowing to Him.

The Lord said :

52. "Oh gentle Prahlāda ! May good betide you ! Oh the best among the Asuras ! I am verily pleased with you. Ask whatever boon you like. I am the bestower of all the desires of men.

53. For, Oh long-lived one, even a glimpse of Mine is difficult to get to those who have not propitiated me. Having but once visualized me, a being never suffers an affliction any more.

54. Hence noble and pious Souls who are highly fortunate and are desirous of attaining bliss, try to propitiate me with all their heart, as I am the Lord (and bestower) of all blessings."

Nārada said :

55. Even though Prahlāda, the best of Asuras, was thus tempted with boons which excite allurements in all beings, he desired none of them, as he was exclusively devoted to the Lord (expecting no reward for his unflinching devotion).

CHAPTER TEN

Prahlāda enthroned. The conquest of Tripura

Nārada said :

1. The child, Prahlāda who looked upon all that (offer of boons etc.) as an impediment to the practice of *Bhakti-Yoga* (*Yoga* of Devotion), slightly smiled, and addressed Lord *Nṛsiṃha* (the Lord of the sense organs) as follows:

Prahlāda said :

2. Pray, do not tempt me who am addicted by nature (lit. birth) to pleasures, with (the promise of) those boons. Being afraid of contacts with them and in (sheer) disgust of them, I have resorted to you with the desire of securing liberation (from *samsāra*).

3. Oh Lord ! Meseems it is with the desire of ascertaining the characteristics of a real servant or devotee that your worship directed me to choose objects of pleasure which are the seeds of the transmigration of the Self (*samsāra*) and are like so many knots binding the heart.

4. Otherwise that (offer) would have been impossible from you who are full of mercy, Oh Father of all !¹ He who hankers after blessings from you, is but a merchant, and not a real servant (devotee)².

5. Verily he is not a real servant who desires to secure worldly pleasures (in return for services) from his master. Nor is he a real master who grants such comforts to play the lord upon his servant.

6. But I am your devotee who cherishes no desire and you are the Master who expect nothing (from your servant). Here, between us, there is no object (to be gained) as between the king and his servant.

1. Some editions add here:

naṣṭa-dṛṣṭes tamasyāndhe tvamekaḥ pāradarśanaḥ

You are the only guide to lead across to the other shore of the ocean of *samsāra*, the people who have lost their eye-sight in blinding darkness.

2. After this line Andhra edition adds:

Sa vai svāmī, sa vai bhṛtyo, gunalubdhau na kāmukau !

Verily he is the master and he is the servant. They are so due to their appreciation of qualities, but not for any gain or pleasure.

7. Oh foremost one among the bestowers of boons ! If (at all) You (want to) confer any boons on me, Oh Lord, I seek of your Worship the boon that no desire should germinate in my heart.

8. For, with the rise of desires, the (powers of) the senses, the mind, the vital air, the Soul, righteousness, fortitude, judgment, modesty, prosperity, energy, memory and truth come to an end (once for all).

9. When a man gets rid of desires fixed (deep) in the heart, then alone he becomes fit to attain to thy status, Oh lotus-eyed Lord.

10 (Now I remember the *Mantra* to which I was initiated by Nārada'.

Salutations to You, Oh Almighty Lord, the Supreme Person, the High-Souled One, Hari, the wonderful lion, Supreme Brahman and Paramātmān

Lord Nṛsiṃha said :

11. Those who are exclusively devoted to Me like you, never expect from Me any blessing in this or in the next world Still (it is my order that you shall enjoy throughout this *Manvantara* the luxuries of the overlordship of the Daityas here.

12. You continue to enjoy listening to my stories so dear to you. Realize within your own heart Me, the Lord present in all beings, and the presiding deity of sacrifices. Dedicating all your activities to Me, worship Me, in meditation.

13. Having exhausted your merit by enjoying pleasure and sin by doing meritorious actions (or by *prāyaścitta*—expiatory rites) and given up your body in course of time, and spread such extremely pure renown as to be sung in heaven, you shall attain to Me completely liberated from all bonds.

* Here ŚR. quotes Katha Upa. 2.3. 14—

*Yadā sarīe pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hrđi śritāḥ/
atha martyomrto bhavatyatra Brahma samaśnute//*

When one gets rid of all the desires residing (fixed) in one's heart, the mortal becomes immortal immediately and attains oneness with Brahman in this very life.

14. A person who recites this song (prayer) sung by you to Me and remembers you and Me, becomes free from the bondage of *karman* in due course.

Prahlāda said :

15-17. Oh Supreme Lord ! The Lord of those who graciously confer boons ! I seek from you this boon that my father, ignorant of Your being the Divine Light, and with his mind overwhelmed (lit. pierced through) with indignation, reviled you who are the veritable Father of the World and the Master, by calling You the murderer of his brother, and through wrong outlook, behaved sinfully to me, Your devotee. May (my father) be absolved of the terrible sins which are too difficult to be crossed, even though he must have been purified when he was glanced at by you who are compassionate to the afflicted.

The Lord said :

18. Oh sinless righteous saint ! Inasmuch as you, the purifier of the family, have been born in his house, your father along with twentyone generations of his fore-fathers stands absolved of all sins¹.

19. Wherever my devotees, extremely serene, impartial in outlook, noble in character and of pious behaviour, are present, they sanctify that country (along with its inhabitants) even if it be sinful like that of *Kīkaṭa*.

20. Oh Lord of Daityas ! They (My devotees) who, out of devotion unto Me, have become devoid of desires² (which are at the root of anger, violence etc.), do not trouble any creature in any category of beings, high or low, by any means.

1. ŚR. explains that as Hiranyakaśipu was the 3rd in generation from god Brahmā, here the twentyone generations of his previous birth are implied.

VC. adds: Twentyone generations of forefathers in your (Prahlāda's) twentyone previous incarnations are included here

2. mad-bhāvena gatasprhaḥ—Realizing my presence everywhere, they entertain no jealousy against anyone—VJ.

21. In this world, there are men who follow your way of life and become My devotees. But certainly, you stand as a model to all my devotees.

22. Oh child Prahlāda ! (As a formality) perform the obsequies of your father who has been thoroughly purified through contact with My person (and has become hence sinless). Now, being blest with you as a pious son, he will certainly attain to higher worlds.

23. As directed by exponents of the Vedas, you occupy the throne of your father. Concentrating your mind on Me, carry out your duties with complete devotion to Me. Oh child !

Nārada said :

24. In compliance of the command of the Lord, Prahlāda also performed all the funeral rites of his father. And he was installed as a king by excellent Brāhmaṇas (and governed as per instructions of the Lord.)

25. Seeing the countenance of the Man-Lion Hari graciously pleased, Brahmā who was surrounded with gods, praised Him with holy Vedic hymns and submitted (as follows):

Brahmā said :

26. Oh God of gods ! The Supreme Ruler of all ! The Creator of all beings ! Oh the First born one ! It is fortunate that You have slain the wicked demon, the tormentor of the world.

27. It was this demon who, having secured boons from me, could not be killed by anyone of my creation. Being arrogant with (the powers acquired by) penance and *Yoga* and with prowess he violated the code of righteousness.

28. Luckily, his son, though a child, is a pious Soul and a great devotee of Yours. Fortunately he has been saved by You from death, and he has now attained to You.

29. Oh Lord ! He who, with concentrated mind, contemplates on this form of Yours, will be protected on all sides from fear—even from the god of death wishing to kill one.

Nṛsiṃha said :

30. Oh lotus-born god ! No such boon is to be conferred by you on Asuras. A boon bestowed on those who are cruel by nature, is harmful like feeding serpents with milk.

Nārada said :

31. Oh king Yudhiṣṭhira! Having spoken thus, Lord Hari Who is normally invisible to all beings and Who was worshipped by god Brahmā, vanished on that very spot.

32. Then Prahlāda worshipped god Brahmā, Śiva, Prajāpatis and gods—all of whom were parts of the Almighty Lord—and bowed them with his head.

33. Thereafter, the lotus-seated god Brahmā, together with sages headed by Śukra, crowned Prahlāda as the Lord of Daityas and Dānavas.

34. Then, having felicitated Prahlāda and bestowed their highest blessings on him, the gods headed by Brahmā who were worshipped by him again, returned to their respective places, Oh King.

35. In this way, the two attendants of Viṣṇu (Jaya and Vijaya) who were born as sons to Diti (due to the imprecation of Brāhmaṇas) were killed by Hari, present in their heart due to the hostile attitude adopted by them towards Hari.

36. And due to the curse of a Brāhmaṇa, both of them were born again as the demons Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa of ten heads, who were killed by Rāma's arrows.

37. While lying on the field of battle with their hearts pierced with Rāma's arrows, both of them quitted their physical bodies with their hearts fixed on Him (Rāma), as (it happened) in their previous birth (as Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu).

38. Both of those (attendants of Viṣṇu) were now born here as Śiśupāla and Dantavakra. It is in Your very presence that they merged in Lord Hari by entertaining continuous enmity towards Him.

39. Kings who were the enemies of Kṛṣṇa shed off, at the end of their life, whatever sins they have committed in the previous life, and become like unto Him through constant meditation like a caterpillar which, through constant brooding, is transformed into a wasp.

40. Just as votaries of the Lord, through their unflinching devotion to Hari attain to perfect identity with Him, (inimical) kings like Śiśupāla and others, through their constant brooding over Him (as their enemy) attained to similarity of form like Him.

41. I have answered to you in details all the queries made by you and also the identity with Hari attained by His enemies like the son of Damaghoṣa (Śiśupāla).

42. This is the sacred story of the (Man-lion) incarnation of the noble-souled Kṛṣṇa, the devotee of Brāhmaṇas—a story (containing the narration) of slaying the two ancient Daityas (viz. Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu).

43-44. This narration includes the life (and character) of Prahlāda, the great votary of the Lord, and (a detailed description of) his devotion, knowledge non-attachment and also of the true nature and an account of the glorious deeds of Hari who is the Lord of the creation, maintenance and the destruction (of the universe). (It describes) the great revolutions in the positions of gods and demons in course of time.

45. In this chronicle has been described the righteous path of the devotees of the Lord which leads to the attainment of (one-ness with) Him; and all topics relating to the soul (spiritual knowledge) have been thoroughly discussed.

46. Whoever, after reverentially listening to this heroic narrative of the heroic deeds of Viṣṇu, recites it to others is liberated from the bonds of Karmas (good or bad).

47. Whoever peruses piously with concentrated mind the sportive actions of Lord Viṣṇu (the Most Ancient Person) in assuming the Lion form and slaying Hiraṇyakaśipu, the leader of the legions of demons, and listens to (lit. having listened to) the (recital of the) hallowing glory of the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu's son (Prahlāda), the foremost among the righteous, attains to the region (Mokṣa) which is beyond the range of fear.

48. (Oh Yudhiṣṭhira!) You are certainly immensely more fortunate in this world (as compared with Prahlāda etc. his spiritual preceptor Nārada, as well as your forefathers and other great sages) inasmuch as great sages who sanctify the world, pay visit to you from all quarters, and the

Supreme Brahman Himself, concealing His greatness in the guise of a human being, resides with you in your houses.

49. This Kṛṣṇa who is your dear friend and well-wisher, your maternal uncle's son, your very adorable self, guide and advisor carrying out your behests (as your representative or charioteer), is verily the *Brahman* who is the embodiment of the ecstatic experience of the absolute Supreme bliss (unconditioned by any *upādhi*) which is sought after by the great.

50. May Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Sātvatas whose direct essential nature has not been actually comprehended or described with their intellect by gods like Śiva and Brahmā, and who has been devoutly worshipped by us through silent meditation and renunciation, be gracious unto us. [The Supreme Brahman does not reside in Prahlāda's palace. Nor do sages go there to have an audience with him. Nor does He act like a cousin. Hence, Oh Yudhiṣṭhira and Pāṇḍavas, you are immensely more fortunate than Prahlāda and we.]

51. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira ! he is that very Lord who, in days of yore, extended the glory of god Rudra as it was eclipsed by Maya, the master of innumerable delusive powers.

The King (Yudhiṣṭhira) asked :

52. Be pleased to describe to us in which action Maya destroyed the glory of god Śiva and the way in which Lord Kṛṣṇa (re-established and) enhanced it.

Nārada said :

53. Asuras who were completely vanquished in the battle by gods who were strengthened by Lord Kṛṣṇa, sought the refuge of Maya the Supreme Preceptor of all conjurors (experts in the arts of illusion or magic).

54. The master-conjuror constructed three (flying-fortress-like) cities made of gold, silver and iron respectively. Their movements (arrival and departure) were undetectable and the (war) materials and equipments provided therein were beyond the conception of gods (And he handed these over to Asuras).

55. Remembering their old hostility, the leaders of Asura armies destroyed the three worlds along with the rulers,

themselves remaining invisible with the help of those (flying) cities, Oh King.

56. Oh King, thereupon all residents of the three worlds, along with their rulers, approached god Śiva and prayed, "Be pleased, Oh God, to protect us, Your own people (who are practically) destroyed by Asuras residing in three (flying) cities.

57. Out of grace unto the celestials, the almighty god Śiva reassured the gods not to be afraid, and fitted an arrow (charged with mystic powers) to his bow, and discharged the missile at the (flying) cities.

58. Fiery arrows, like streams of rays emanating from the orb of the Sun, shot forth from that shaft and the cities, being screened by them, became invisible.

59. Struck with those shafts, all the citizens of those cities, fell dead. But the great *Yogī* Maya brought them and put them into a well of nectar (excavated by him in the cities).

60. At the touch of the resuscitating fluid prepared by him (Maya), they sprang to life with adamantine bodily frames endowed with extraordinary vigour, like fires of the lightning tearing open the clouds.

61. Finding god Śiva (the bull-bannered god) frustrated in his undertaking and dejected, this Lord Viṣṇu devised an expedient for it.

62. This Lord Viṣṇu assumed the form of a cow and Brahmā became the calf. Entering the cities at midday, he drank out the nectar from the well of that (immortalizing) fluid.

63-65. Though witnessing it, the Asuras (guarding the well) became too bewildered to prevent it. Knowing that and remembering that it was destined to be so, Maya, the past-master in devising expedients addressed the following (words) to the guards of that well of nectar who were stricken with grief : "No one whether a god, a demon, a man or any other being is capable of thwarting what has been ordained by Fate regarding one's own Self or another or of both."

Then by His own potencies, He (Lord Kṛṣṇa) devised the equipment of battle (war-materials) for god Śiva.

66. By means of His powers like righteousness, wisdom, renunciation, affluence, asceticism, knowledge, action and others, (He created for god Śiva) a chariot, a charioteer, the flag, horses, a bow, an armour, shafts and others.

67-68. Clad in the armour and seated in the chariot, god Śiva took up his bow and arrow. At noon, at the auspicious time, called *Abhijit*, Hara (Śiva) fixed the shaft to the bow and burnt down the three impregnable cities. Kettle-drums were sounded in the sky which was crowded with hundreds of celestial cars.

69. Gods, sages, manes (*pitṛs*) and leaders of Siddhas shouted "Victory" in joyous exclamation, and poured showers of flowers. The troupes of celestial nymphs danced in ecstasy.

70. Having thus burnt down the three (flying) cities, the venerable god Śiva (destroyer of cities) returned to his own residence while being praised by Brahmā and others.

71. Such and others are the exploits of this Hari who with his Māyā Potency imitates the human form (i.e. way of life) that the heroic achievements of the Preceptor (or father) of the world which purify the worlds are sung by sages. What else should I relate next ?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Eternal Path of Religion

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having heard the narrative—so highly praised in the assemblies of the righteous and devotees of the Lord like (god Brahmā and others—of Prahlāda (the ruler of Daityas), the leader of illustrious devotees of the Lord, whose mind was absorbed in the meditation of God Viṣṇu, Yudhiṣṭhira was filled with delight. He again made a further query of Nārada, the son of the self-created god Brahmā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

2. I am anxious to hear from you, Oh Omniscient sage the eternal Law—the righteous course of conduct prescribed for men—enjoining the duties to be performed by persons belonging to different classes of society (*varṇa*) and stages in life (*āśrama*)—the observance of which (*Dharma*) leads one to attain knowledge and devotion.

3. Your worshipful self is the son of no other than the highest deity, Brahmā, the Lord of all created beings. Out of his sons, you have been the most beloved one by virtue of your asceticism, Yogic powers and meditation of the Lord, Oh Brahman ! (You must, therefore, have learnt from him the secret of *dharma*).

4. Merciful, pious, tranquil Brāhmaṇas like you who are devoted exclusively to Nārāyaṇa know the highest secret of Dharma but not others (the so-called Law-givers—*Smṛtikāras*).

Nārada said :

5. Saluting the venerable birthless God Nārāyaṇa, the source of Dharma, I shall explain to you the Eternal Law as I heard it from (His) Nārāyaṇa's lips.

6. He incarnated along with his part-manifestation Nara, as the son of Dharma and Mūrti, the daughter of Dakṣa. He still continues to perform penance for the welfare of the people, at the hermitage at Badarikā.

7. For Lord Hari, the embodiment of all Vedas, is the source of *Dharma*; *Smṛtis* are codified by those who knew him. And it is by abiding by that *Dharma* that one's Soul gets pleased, Oh King.¹

8-12. (1) Truthfulness, (2) mercy, (3) asceticism, (4) purity, (5) endurance, (6) power of discrimination between right and wrong, (7-8) control of mind and the senses, (9) non-violence, (10) celibacy, (11) charity, (12) the study of Vedas or repetition internally of prayers to god, (13) straight-

1. *Vedo' khilo dharma-mūlam Smṛti-śīle ca tad-vidām /*
ācāras caiva sādhanām atmanas tuṣṭir eva ca // —*Manu-Smṛti*
Śrutiḥ smṛtiḥ sadācāraḥ svasya ca priyam ātmanah /
samyak-saṅkalpajah kāmō dharma-mūlam idam smṛtam //
 —*Tājñavalkeya-smṛti*

forwardness, (14) contentment, (15) service unto thou who regard all beings as equals, (16) gradual withdrawal from worldly activities, (17) Observation of the fruitlessness of human actions, (18) refraining from useless talk, (19) investigation of the nature of the Soul (and its distinctness from the body), (20) equitable distribution of food, eatables etc. among creatures according to their worth (and needs), (21) to look upon them, especially human beings as one's own self and as the deity, Oh Pāṇḍu's son (Yudhiṣṭhira); (22) hearing (the holy name or stories of the Lord), (23) chanting of his name, (24) contemplation on, (25) service of, (26) worship of, (27) Bowing to, (28) rendering service to God, (29) behaving as his friend and (30) dedication of oneself to Hari who is the goal of the noble Souls—these thirty characteristics are said to constitute the highest *dharma* of all human beings whereby the Soul of the Universe is propitiated and pleased, Oh King.

13. He is called a *dvija* or twice-born one whose (sixteen) purifying rites (accompanied by recitation of *mantras*) have been performed without any break in succession, and to whom god Brahmā has designated as such. Performance of sacrifices, study of scriptures and charity are prescribed for all twice-born classes (viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣātriya and Vaiśya) who are of pure birth and conduct. It is for these that duties incumbent on different stages in life (*āśrama*) are prescribed.

14. Scriptural study and others (such as teaching, performance of sacrifice, charity and acceptance of gifts) six (in all) are prescribed for the Brāhmaṇas. Non-acceptance of gifts is laid down for the other (Kṣātriyas). The means of livelihood of a king who protects his subjects, is derived from taxes levied on subjects, with the exception of Brāhmaṇas (who were exempted from taxation).

15. The Vaiśya is to maintain himself by agriculture (cattle-breeding) and trade, and should follow the Brāhmaṇas. A Śūdra is to render service to the twice-born castes whose means of livelihood constitute his means of subsistence also.

16. Means of livelihood for Brāhmaṇas is of four types: (1) various occupations (e. g. agriculture, cattle breeding), (2) acceptance of articles modestly (without asking any one for anything), (3) begging for grain from door to door like

Yāyāvaras (vagrant mendicants) and (4) gleaning grains of corn from the leftover of the threshing floor in the field (*śīla*) or of the market place (*uñcha*)—these types are in the ascending order of preference.

17. With the exception of Kṣatriyas¹, no person born in a lower class should adopt the vocation ordained for the higher class under normal circumstances (lit. when not threatened with serious danger. The Kṣatriyas can adopt Brahmanical means of livelihood, except that of accepting charitable gifts). In times of danger anybody (belonging to any class) may resort to any profession (prescribed for any class).

18. A person may sustain his life by following the vocations or professions (technically) known as *ṛta*, *amṛta*, *mṛta*, *pramṛta* or *satyāṇṛta*, but should never lead a dog's life (*śva-vṛtti*) (even) for preserving one's life.

19-20. The gleaning of corn from the leftovers of field or of the marketplace is called *ṛta*; whatever is given to one unsolicited is known as *amṛta*; *mṛta* is daily begging, and *pramṛta* means cultivation; trading is *satyāṇṛta* (a mixture of truth and falsehood), while rendering service to the low-born is *śva-vṛtti*. A Brāhmaṇa and a Kṣatriya should always shun that 'dog mode of life' which is detested by all; for a Brāhmaṇa is an embodiment of all the Vedas and Kṣatriya (the ruler) is the personification of all deities.

21. Control over mind and senses, asceticism, purity, contentment, forbearance and forgiveness, straightforwardness, knowledge, compassion, fervent devotion to Lord Viṣṇu and truthfulness are the characteristics of a Brāhmaṇa.

22. Valour, prowess, fortitude, adventurous spirit, liberality, self-control, forgiveness, devotion to Brāhmaṇas, majestic graciousness and defence of the weak, constitute the characteristics of a Kṣatriya.

23. Devotion unto gods, teachers and Lord Viṣṇu, maintenance (and achievement) of three objectives in life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*), faith in *Śāstras*, constant effort (in making money) and skill in transactions, form the characteristics of the Vaiśyas.

1. With the exception of Kṣatriyas, other lower *varṇas* (viz. Vaiśyas and Śūdras) may follow the professions of the higher classes—VJ.

24. Submissiveness, purity, faithful (lit. untreacherous) service of the master, performance of the five daily sacrifices by bowing down only (without uttering the *mantras*) abstention from theiving, truthfulness¹ and protection of the cattle and the Brāhmaṇas—these are the characteristics of the Śūdras.

25. The duties of women who look upon their husband as a (veritable) god are: rendering service to the husband, compliance to his wishes, friendliness to his relatives and ever-observance of the same vows as those of their husband.

26-27. A pious lady should keep the house clean by sweeping and plastering (with cowdung), and decorating it with auspicious coloured diagrams and pictures on the floor. She should adorn her person with ornaments and clean clothes and always keep the utensils etc. in the house clean and polished. She should, at every time, abide by the desires, great or small, of her husband with modesty, self-control and address him lovingly in true yet pleasant words.

28. Contented (with what she has), not covetous, diligent, knowing what is *dharma* (righteousness), sweet yet true in speech, careful, pious, affectionate—thus she should serve her husband who is not fallen (by committing any of the five major sins, viz. murder of a Brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, theft, adultery with his preceptor's wife and fellowship with a criminal of above type).

29. A woman who, as goddess Lakṣmī would do unto Lord Hari, serves her husband with a single-minded devotion, regarding him as Lord Viṣṇu, would like Lakṣmī in the company of Lord Viṣṇu, rejoice hereafter in the region of Hari (Vaikuṇṭha) along with her husband who (through her devotion) has attained the resemblance of Hari (in form).

30. The means of livelihood of mixed castes² such as the *antyajas* (the low-born ones) *antevāsīyas* (communities living at

1. v.l. *maudhya* in VJ. which he explains as the cutting of hair, moustaches, nails etc.

2. ŚR. states that children born of a marriage between a woman of a higher caste and a man from a lower caste are *pratiloma* and are regarded as a low-born *antyaja*. Those castes are as follows: Washermen, Workers in leather, Naṭas (ropedancers), Buruḍas (basket-makers), Kaiyartas (fishermen), Medas (followers of degraded positions and Bhillas (Bhils—a mountain tribe).

the farther end of a village such as *cāṇḍāla*, *Mātāṅga* and *Pukkasa*) are the hereditary callings followed by their respective families, provided it is not robbery and any sinful vocation¹.

31. In every age the *dharma* (the course of duties) of people is generally determined by their innate nature (according as they are predominantly *sāttvic*, *rājasa* or *tāmasa*). Sages—the Vedic seers—have regarded that (particular) course of *dharma* as conducive to happiness (of persons with such natures) both here and hereafter.

32. One who follows a vocation determined as suitable to his special nature (as determined by his caste) and does his duty, goes on relinquishing that type of work suitable to his disposition) and gradually attains to the state of the attributeless *ātman*.

33. A field which is constantly sown with seeds automatically becomes unfertile. It is unsuitable for sowing seeds again and if seed be sown, it perishes.

34. Similarly the mind, the seat of desires, becomes sated and disgusted by overindulgence in pleasures, but not by drops of enjoyments, like fire with drops of clarified butter.

35. If what has been described as the characteristic of a particular caste or class in the society be found in another person belonging to a different community, then the latter should be distinctly designated as coming under the class.

1. *Śreyān sva-dharma vigrahaḥ paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt /*

B.G.325; 18.47

CHAPTER TWELVE

Inquiry into the Right Conduct.

(Duties of Brahmācārins and Vānaprasthas)

Nārada continued :

1. A Brahmācārī should dwell in the house of his preceptor. He should be self-controlled and comply with what is agreeable to the preceptor. He should behave humbly like a servant, and entertain very strong affection to his teacher.

2. In the morning and in the evening, he should wait upon the preceptor and worship the Fire-god, the Sun-god and other prominent deities. Observing perfect silence at both the twilights (and in the mid-day), he should repeat the *Gāyatrī mantra* with concentrated mind (while performing *Sandhyā*).

3. If (and when) called by his preceptor, he should study the Vedas (at his feet) with a perfect concentration and disciplined manner. He should bow down to his (teacher's) feet with his head, both at the beginning and the completion of the lesson.

4. With his hair braided, he should wear a *mekhalā* (a girdle of *muñja* grass), the deer-skin and (two pieces of) cloth, the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) and carry with him a staff and a *kamaṇḍalu* (water-pot of gourd) and a handful of *darbha* grass as prescribed (in the *Śāstras*¹).

5. He should beg alms both in the morning and in the evening, and offer it to his teacher. If permitted, he should partake of the food, if not (as a test or a punishment or as occasionally required on days of observing fast), he should fast.

6. He should be of a good character, moderate in eating, alert and prompt (in work), of reverential faith in *Śāstras* and self-controlled. It is only when absolutely necessary and to that much extent only (e. g. getting alms) that he should deal

1. According to *Śāstras*, a Brāhmaṇa pupil should carry a staff of *Palāśa* tree, a Kṣātrīya of a *Bilva* tree and a Vaiśya of the *Audumbara* (Indian fig) tree.

with women or with those who are influenced (lit. enslaved) by women.

7. A person other than a householder, who has taken the great vow of celibacy, should avoid all talk with young women. For the senses are (by nature) so powerful and violent that they carry away the mind of even a recluse (*Yati* who is expected to be perfectly self-controlled).

8. A youthful Brahmacārin (student) should not allow a personal service, e. g. combing his hair, massaging, bathing and anointing his person, done by women from his teacher's family, especially if they are young.

9. For verily a young woman is (like) a fire and a man like pot containing clarified butter. One should avoid (the company of) one's daughter in a secluded place, and at other times he should remain with her so long as the work or duty demands it (even in public places).

10* So long as by self-realization one has not firmly determined that his body, senses or the universe etc. are illusory

*VR (1): (So long as *Īśvara* keeps this body (which is the illusion of the Soul) capable of doing work, the notion of duality (viz. one is a god or a man or a *Brāhmaṇa*) is found to persist and leads to illusions, he should not give up the duties laid down in *Sāstras*.

Or

(II) Even though one realizes that his Self is distinct from his body, he, so long as he persists to live in his body, should not give up the duties prescribed for him in the *Sāstras* so long as he is able to discharge them.

VJ. states that the world is real and so long as God keeps the *jīva* in a worldly knowledge which is unreal and not true, the perverse notions shall persist and bondage of the world due to ignorance shall continue.

VC.: What danger is there to self-controlled man who has abandoned the company of relatives? (The reply:) Even though one has renounced worldly objects, so long as one has not completely wiped out one's affinity to them from the mind, the notion of duality shall not cease to persist.

GD.: Even though a man is an *aṁśa* (a part) of the blissful Lord, he experiences the contrariness viz. miseries of hell etc.

BP.: So long as the notion of duality persists one should not give up the duties laid down in the *Sāstras*.

and the *jīva* has not attained perfect mastery over himself by identifying himself with the Supreme Lord, the notion of duality (between a man and woman) will continue to persist (provoking thereby the desire to enjoy) through false attribution of *guṇas*.

11. All these (instructions contained from verses 6 to 10) are laid down for the householder, and much more so, even in the case of *Samnyāsin* (a recluse). A householder who is expected to be with his wife at particular period of time, may optionally stay with his preceptor.

12. Those who have taken the vow of *Brahmcharya* (celibacy) should avoid the use of collyrium, unguents, massage of the body, dealings with women, painting or viewing pictures of women, meat, spirituous liquor (in the case of those who are permitted to drink, honey in the case of *Brāhmaṇas*), garlands, sandal pigment and ornaments.

13. In this way, having stayed in the preceptor's house, a *dvija* (a twice-born-Ārya) should study and understand to the best of his ability and to the extent of his requirements, the meaning of three Vedas (*Rk*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*), along with their (six) auxiliaries¹ and the *Upaniṣads* (*Vedānta*, philosophical treatises).

14. Having presented, if at all he can afford to do so, with what is desired by his preceptor (as "fee for the course") and having obtained his permission, he (the student) should enter the householder's life, or retire to the forest (for performing penance etc.), or renounce the world to wander as a *Yati* (recluse), or stay with his preceptor (as a lifelong *Brahmacārin*).

15. He should look upon (conceive) Lord *Viṣṇu* as if having entered into the fire, the preceptor, himself and the elements (e. g. the earth, the fire) together with all creatures sheltered in Him; for He is their Inner Controller, even though

1. These are intended as aids for the correct pronunciation, and interpretation of the Vedic texts and the correct applications of the *Mantras* in the religious rites. The *aṅgas* are six in number, viz. 1. *Śikṣā*—'Phonetics, the science of proper articulation and pronunciation. 2. *Kalpa* (application) ritual or ceremonial, 3. *Vyākaraṇa* 'Grammar' 4. *Nirukta* 'Etymological explanation of difficult Vedic words'. 5. *Chandas*—'Science of prosody', 6. *Jyotiṣa*—astronomy.

the Lord (having already pervaded these from within and without) does not actually enter.

16. A person belonging to the order of Brahmacharya, Vānaprastha (an anchorite), a saṁnyāsin (a recluse) or a householder who contemplates thus (the omnipresence of the Lord), and follows the course of duties ordained for his particular *āśrama* (stage of life), realizes what is required to be known, and attains to the Supreme Brahman.

17. I shall now explain to you the code of conduct approved by the sages and prescribed for Vānaprasthas (anchorites), by observing which, a sage easily attains Maharloka, the heaven of sages.

18. An anchorite should not eat the product of cultivation (e. g. rice, wheat) or anything (like fruits, roots etc.), which though not a product of tillage, ripened before time. He should not partake of food cooked on fire. He should subsist on what is ripe or cooked by rays of the Sun.

19. He should prepare *caru*¹ and *puroḍāśa*² of corn wild growth (Nīvāra) and of a permanent nature. When he procures new and fresh eatables, he should reject the old ones (stored by him).

20. It is just for the preservation of the (sacred) fire that he should take shelter in a house or cottage or a cave in mountains. He himself should bear exposure to snow, wind, fire, rain and heat of the Sun.

21-22. The anchorite with matted hair (on the head) should wear (without shaving) the hair on his body, moustaches, beard and nails and dirt (not properly washed). He should take with him *kamaṇḍalu* (a pot of water), deer-skin, staff, bark-garments and utensils of fire worship. The sage should thus wander in the forest for twelve, eight, four, two or one year, i. e. to that length of time which the mind does not get perverted through the (severity of) austerities.

1. *caru*—An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manis. *ASD*. p. 204.

2. *puroḍāśa*—Boiled rice rounded into a cake and usually divided into parts which are kept in separate receptacles for offering to different deities.

23. If (after the period of stay in the forest) he finds that, owing to ill health (diseases) or old age, he is incapable of pursuing his courses of duties (as a Vānaprastha) or prosecuting his studies in philosophy, he should adopt the vow of fasting etc. (If he is capable, he should become a *saṁnyāsin*—a recluse).

24. (Before beginning the fast) he should withdraw and deposit the sacred fires (e. g. *āhavanīya* and others) within his Self. He should renounce the notions of 'I' and 'Mine', and should merge the constituents of his body in their own causes (viz. the sky, the air and other three elements).

25. A self-controlled man should merge the cavities in his body (e. g. eyes, ears, nostrils) into the sky (the element—the *mahābhūta* called *ākāśa*), his exhalations (vital-breaths) into the air, the temperature of his body into the fire, (fluids like) blood, phlegm and pus into the water and the rest (hard substances like bones, muscles etc.) into the earth—thus assigning them each to its respective origin. (Thus he should merge his gross body).

26. He should consign his speech along with the organ of speech to the Fire, even his hands and handicraft to Indra, his feet along with (the power of) locomotion to Viṣṇu, the organ of pleasure (along with the power of procreation) to Prajāpati (deity presiding over procreation).

27. (He should merge) the organ of defecation and act of excretion in Mṛtyu (the god of death) directing these organs to their proper places (viz. the deities presiding over those particular organs); his auditory sense along with (its object), sound into (deities presiding over) cardinal points; and his tactual organ along with its tactility to the *ātman* or wind-god).

28. Oh King, he should deposit his eyes (eye-sight) and the colours and forms (the objects of the eye) with the Sun-god, the tongue or its objects of taste such as sweet, bitter etc. in water (or god Varuṇa), and the olifactory sense along with its objects i. e. various smells, with the Earth.

29. He should merge his mind along with its desires and objects in the Moon-god, the intelligence and the objects to be grasped by it in the highest god Brahmā. He should

consign actions with self-consciousness to god Rudra through whose instrumentality the activities actuated by the notions of 'I-ness' and 'Mine-ness' proceed. He should merge his chitta (reason, heart) along with *Sattva* in *Kṣetrajñā* (*Hiranyagarbha*) and *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra* along with *guṇas* in the Supreme Brahman).

30. He should then dissolve the earth into water, absorb water into fire, fire into the air and the air into the ether. The ether or *Ākāśa* is to be merged into the principle called ego (*aham*), and that into *Mahat* (the principle of cosmic Intelligence), and that into the unmanifested *Prakṛti* and that unmanifest *Pradhāna* into *Paramātmān* (the Supreme Soul).

31. Having thus realized the Soul as identical with *Paramātmān*, and nothing but indestructible consciousness and becoming free from the notion of duality¹, he should cease to function like fire that has consumed its own source (fuel).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

*The Code of Conduct for Saṁnyāsins
and a dialogue between Avadhūta and Prahlaḍa*

Nārada continued :

1. If a person is thus capable and fit (physically and mentally), he should take to the life of a vagrant recluse. Owning nothing else except his body, he should observe the rule of staying one night in a village, and thus wander over the earth, being totally desireless.

2. If at all he is to wear a piece of cloth, it should be a strip of cloth just sufficient to cover his private parts. Unless there is some serious danger, he should not take anything which has been renounced except the staff and other emblems (e. g. *kamaṇḍalu*-water-pot) characteristic of a *saṁnyāsin*.

1. *advaya*—with the faith that there is no independent absolute thing other than Hari.

3. Delighted in his own Self and seeking no shelter, he should wander all alone as a mendicant subsisting on alms. He should be friendly to all beings, serene and devoted exclusively to Nārāyaṇa.

4* He should visualize this universe in the immutable *ātman* (Self) who is beyond (and distinct from) cause and effect and should perceive the Self as the Supreme Brahman present everywhere in the universe, (a product) of causes and consequences.

5. During the mediate state between sleep and wakefulness, one should concentrate on the soul within, and should try to perceive the true nature of the Self. He should look upon bondage and emancipation as merely illusory and not real.

6. He should welcome neither death, which is inevitable, nor life that is transitory. But he should simply wait for the Time which brings about the birth and death of beings (and that of one's body as well).

7. He should not be attached to *Śāstras* dealing with topics other than *ātman*. Nor should he try to maintain himself by following any profession (like astrology, medicine practised by him as a *grhastha*). He should avoid all form of disputation. He should not persistently adhere to any party.

8. He should not attract students. Nor should he study numerous books¹ (lest they should cause confusion or distraction). He should not undertake the exposition of some sacred text². Nor should he take up the establishment of any institution or monastery.

9. The duties etc. prescribed for the order of recluses (*samnyāsins*) are not meant for securing religious merit in the case of the noble-souled ones (*Paramahansas*) who are of serene and equable minds (The rules are to be observed till the recluse realizes the highest wisdom). Thereafter he may

* VR. asserts the Viśiṣṭādvaita position: *Paramātman* is distinct from the Sentient (*Cid*) and the Non-Sentient (*Acid*). By nature he is free from modifications. He (the recluse) should look upon the universe as the inseparable body of *Paramātman* Who is the Inner Controller.

1. Books not dealing with Vedānta.

2. Texts other than those on Vedānta—VD.

continue to practise the rules (for setting up an ideal life before the public) or discard them.

10. One whose external signs of being a recluse are not evident but continues his purpose (i. e. concentration with the Self), may, though learned, show himself (i. e. behave externally like) a mad person or an ignorant child; though highly intelligent and wise, he should appear to be dumb in the eyes of the public.

11. On this point an old historical (-cum-legendary) account has been traditionally handed down as an illustration. It is the conversation between Prahlāda and a sage Dattātreyā¹ observing the *Ajagara*² mode of life.

12-13. While Prahlāda, the beloved (devotee) of the Lord, accompanied by a few ministers, was touring through various worlds with a view to acquaint himself with the true nature of the people, he happened to see on the top of the Sahyādri (Western *ghats*) on the bank of the Kāverī, some person lying on bare ground, his pure effulgence being concealed under a coat of dust covering all the part of his body.

14. By his actions, appearances, words of external emblems indicative of his caste (*varṇa*) and stage in life (*āśrama*), people could not recognize him who or what he was and what he was not.

15. Having bowed the sage by touching his feet with his head and having worshipped him with due formalities, the Asura, (himself) a prominent votary of the Lord, who was curious to know (the truth about) him, (the sage) asked him the following question.

16. "You have a robust body like an industrious person who enjoys a luxurious life. Wealth accrues to persons

1. Vide Supra 1.3.11. The Lord incarnated as Datta, the son of Atri and Anasūyā, and taught spiritual lore to king Alarka and Prahlāda.

2. *Ajagara* is a python which is supposed to swallow what comes its way, without making any move on its part. As described in the illustration of Dattātreyā below, a person who has adopted the vow of leading Python's way of life, has just to lie on the bare ground under the sky waiting for his death without making any movement—throwing his body at the mercy of the fate. His object is to enjoy all the fruits of his *karmas* then and there before falling away of his body.

who are industrious and comforts and luxuries can be afforded by moneyed people. Indeed only the bodies of those who are given to luxurious life become corpulent and not otherwise.

17. Lying supine without doing any work as you do, Oh Brahman, you obviously possess no wealth which is the source of enjoyment (of a luxurious life). If you think proper (to disclose), please tell us how your body is corpulent despite your non-indulgence in luxuries and lack of comforts.

18. Learned, capable, clever, possessing wonderfully sweet power of speech and of equable temper as you are, how is it that you lie down (doing nothing) simply looking on that other people are exerting themselves."

Nārada said :

19. Being thus questioned by Prahlāda, the king of Daityas, the great sage, being magnetized by his nectarlike speech, smilingly spoke to him.

The Brāhmaṇa said :

20. Oh foremost of Asuras ! Your honour is esteemed by all great and learned people. By your spiritual insight you certainly know this, viz. the consequences of activity for (obtaining) worldly objects and of renouncing them.

21. Due to your absolute and pure devotion, the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa always abides in your heart. He dispels your ignorance like unto the Sun dispersing darkness.

22. We (I) however, shall (try to) answer your questions according to what I have traditionally learnt (about them). For you deserve respect from those who desire to purify their hearts.

23. Being (induced) to do various actions by powerful desire which is never satiated by enjoyment of suitable objects, and thus becomes the source of the stream of births (and deaths), I was forced to take birth in various species.

24. While wandering (through various types of existence) by force of *karmas*, and through sheer providence, I was brought to the human form of existence which is a gate-way to heaven or final emancipation or to sub-human life or to human life again.

25. Having observed the frustrations and failures of married couples while performing actions for securing happiness and avoiding pain in this life as well, I retired from worldly-activities.

26. Happiness is the essential nature of the Soul¹. It is manifested after withdrawal and cessation of all activities. Having perceived that enjoyments and experiences are fanciful creations of the mind I lie down (supine enjoying whatever is ordained for me by destiny).

27. Having forgotten that this blissful nature is inherent in one's self, a man is verily enmeshed into *samsāra* which is terrible (owing to birth, death and other miseries) and strange (as it consists of birth in celestial, subhuman, human and other-species).

28. He who (being ignorant of his innate blissful state) thinks of finding his object (happiness) elsewhere (outside his Self), is like an ignorant fellow who with a desire to get water (to quench his thirst) leaves water (near him but) covered with aquatic weeds and other overgrowth and runs after the mirage.

29. The body and sense-organs are controlled by Destiny. All the actions and efforts repeatedly done through their instrumentality for securing his happiness and removing his miseries by a luckless person, become fruitless.

30. (Granting that a man's efforts are successful) what pleasure can be derived from the hard-earned wealth and desired objects obtained with great difficulty to a mortal (obsessed with the fear of death) and plagued by (lit. not immune from) three types of miseries such as bodily ailments and others.

31. I perceive the agonies and tensions of wealthy covetous persons who have no control over themselves, and who have lost their sleep, out of fear, as they are suspicious of everybody on all sides.

32. I observe that those who are anxious about their life and wealth, entertain fear from kings, robbers, enemies, their

1. VJ. thinks that the grace of the Lord is necessary for the realization of His bliss.

kinsmen, birds and beasts, beggars, Time and themselves, at every moment.

33. (Therefore) a wise man should give up longings for life and property which are the source of sorrow, infatuation, fear, anger, attachment, despondency, over-exertions and such other (troubles).

34. In this world the bee and the big python are our best teachers, for following their example we have attained renunciation and contentment.

35. I have learnt renunciation of all worldly objects from the bee, the gatherer of honey, for any other person may kill the lord and usurp the hard-earned money like honey after killing the bees.

36. Being free from all desires and with contented mind, I accept what is brought to me by providence. If not, I lie inactive like a big serpent for many days, depending on my power.

37. Sometimes I eat scant food; sometimes I enjoy a heavy meal irrespective of the sweetness or otherwise of the food. Sometime I partake of highly rich and dainty dishes and sometimes worthless food.

38. At some places I eat food, that is offered to me with respect and sometimes with irreverence. Sometimes I do justice to food after eating; sometimes I eat food by day or by night as it is offered to me by chance.

39. Remaining contented in mind, I enjoy what is ordained by fate, and I wear linen garments or silks or deer-skin or rags or any other (fabric) that is offered to me.

40. Sometimes I sleep on the bare ground; sometimes on grass or on a heap of leaves or on a slab of stone or in ashes; sometimes I lie inside a mansion on a rich bed over a precious bedstead as desired by God (or other people).

41. Sometimes I take bath with my body anointed with fragrant pigments. I put on rich garments and wear garlands and ornaments. Sometimes I ride in a chariot or on an elephant or on a horse and sometimes I wander stark-naked like an evil spirit, Oh king.

42. I neither revile nor praise people who are of diverse

nature. I pray for their welfare and bless them with their union with the Almighty Lord Viṣṇu.

43. One should oblate (merge) one's notion of diversity in the mental faculty that perceives such differences, that mental faculty into mind which mistakes the unreal for the real, the mind into the *sāttvic ahaṁkāra* and should absorb that *ahaṁkāra* through *maḥat* in the Māyā regularly.

44. The sage who perceives the Reality, should merge that Māyā into the realization of his soul. Being devoid of all desires, he should establish himself in self-realization and cease all activities.

45. In this way I have described to you my way of life which is closely guarded as a secret, though it is far different from secular and Śāstric canons of behaviour. (I have thus frankly explained this to you) as you are the beloved of God.

Nārada said :

46. Having heard the code of conduct of the highest order of recluses, the Lord of Asuras (Prahlaḍa) worshipped him respectfully. Being pleased in mind he bade good-bye, and returned home.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(The Duties of a householder)

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

1. Oh celestial sage, please explain to me that course of conduct by which a householder like me whose mind is clouded with attachment to house and property, will attain to the above state of emancipation (*mokṣa*) without difficulty.

Nārada said :

1-A (VRs' text adds) : Even though you know it, you have asked this question for the good of the world, Oh king.

I shall explain to you how the duties of a householder lead one to the state of actionlessness (or attainment of *ĵñāna-yoga*).

2. Staying in the household and performing duties (such as *sandhyā*, worship and five *mahā-yajñas*) laid down for a householder as direct offering to Lord Vāsudeva (without expecting any return for it), one should wait upon great sages in order to learn truth.

3. Devoutly listening to the nectar-like sweet stories of the incarnations of Viṣṇu during the leisure time after performance of duties he should constantly be associated with (lit. surrounded by) persons who are tranquil by nature.

4. Through companionship with saintly people, he should gradually release himself from attachment to himself, his wife, his sons etc. which are in the process of being separated from him, and should rise above them like a person awakened from a dream (does in the case of objects seen in the dream).

5. A wise man should be disinterested in and dispassionate to his body and house, but should attend to it to the extent to which it is indispensable. Simulating attachment to them, a man should transcend his status as an ordinary human being and be a recluse. Or (carry out his duties in life).

6. Being free from attachment to himself and his property, he should acquiesce in what his kinsmen, parents, sons, brothers and other well-wishers propose and desire.

7. A wise man should carry out his duties while enjoying what he gets from the heaven (e. g. crops due to rain fall), from mines (e. g. gold, precious stones etc.) and what he gets accidentally by wind fall, as all wealth is created by god Viṣṇu (and is obtained through his grace).

8. Embodied beings can lay claim to that much wealth as is just necessary for filling his belly. He who lays claims on the surplus is a thief and deserves punishment.

9. One should look upon beasts, camels, donkeys, monkeys, rats, serpents, birds and flies like one's own sons (and hence these should not be driven out of the house or fields if they enter and begin to eat), for there is very little difference between them and his sons.

10. Even though a man be a householder, he should not put in extraordinary trouble for getting the three *puruṣārthas*. He should enjoy what is afforded to him by providence according to its place and time.

11. He should duly share his objects of enjoyment with all down to dogs, sinners and people belonging to the lowest strata of the society (lit. who dwell at the end of a village). He should allow his wife whom he ardently claims as his own, to receive guests (unmindful of his inconvenience. ŚR warns that this should not be misconstrued).

12. He who can forego his claim on his wife for whose sake he should lay down his life or would kill his father or preceptor (if he suspects them about their contacts with her) has conquered (secured the grace of) the unconquerable Lord¹ Viṣṇu.

13. How despicable is the body that is convertible into worms (if buried), excretion (if eaten up by carnivorous animals) or ashes (if cremated) ! Equally despicable is (the body of) a wife which contributes to its erotic pleasures ! How great is the Soul which pervades the whole of the sky !

14. A wise person should maintain his livelihood by food, after offering oblations to the deities in five *mahā-yajñas* and should relinquish the notion of his claim of what remains as surplus. Thus he would attain to the position of *paramahamsas*.

15. A man should worship the *antaryāmin* (the Inner Controller) daily by sharing what he has obtained in his own vocation, with gods, sages, human beings, other living beings, *pitṛs* and his own self.

16. If he possesses all the required materials as well as the requisite qualifications for performing sacrifices, he should worship the Lord according to the procedure laid down in the Śrauta and Kalpa Sūtras.

17. But verily, this Venerable Lord, the Enjoyer of Sacrifice is not propitiated to that extent by oblation offered through the (sacrificial) fire as through (morsels of food offered to Him) through the mouths of Brāhmaṇas, Oh King.

18. One should, therefore, worship this Inner Controller (God) through the Brāhmaṇas, gods presiding over five *Mahā-yajñas* as also through mortals like human beings and

other creatures, by offering them objects of enjoyment, according to their respective order, after (feeding) the Brāhmaṇas.

19. If sufficiently rich, a twice-born person (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya) should perform according to his means, the *Śrāddha*, i. e. *Mahālaya* in honour of his (departed) parents as well as their kinsmen and others, in the dark half of Bhādrapada.

20-23. He should (also) perform their *Śrāddha* at the time of the summer and winter solstices (*ayanas*), and the vernal and autumnal equinoxes (*viṣuva*), during the division of time called Vyatipāta; on the day when a *tithi* i.e. the lunar day begins and ends between two sun-rises (technically known as *dinakṣaya*); during the lunar and solar eclipses; on the twelfth lunar day, and when the constellations known as Śravaṇa, Dhaniṣṭhā and Śata-tārakā are on the ascendance; on the third day in the bright half of Vaiśākha (i. e. on *Akṣaya tṛtīyā*); on the ninth lunar day in the bright half of Kārttika (known as *Akṣaya-navamī*); on the four *Aṣṭakas* (eighth lunar day in the dark halves) during the seasons called *Hemanta* and *Śiśira* (i.e. on the eighth day in the dark half of the months of Mārgaśīrṣa, Pauṣa, Māgha and Phālguna); on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha; on the fullmoon day when the constellation Maghā is ascendant (which is in the month of Māgha) on days when the constellations associated with the names of other (lunar) months are ascendant on a full moon day, or even when the moon rises one digit less than the full on that day; on any twelfth lunar day when the constellations Anurādhā, Śravaṇa and the three constellations beginning with the word Uttarā (viz. Uttarāṣāḍhā, Uttarā Bhādrapadā and Uttarā Phālgunī) are ascendant; or when the eleventh lunar day (of any month) is associated with (any of) these three constellations; (and lastly) on any day when the constellation under which a person was born or the constellation called Śravaṇa is ascendant.

24. These are very auspicious times which are conducive to the attainment of prosperity to men on these days. On these days a person should, by every means, try to perform pious acts to the best of his abilities. Thus his merits become most effectual and contribute to his longevity.

25. On these days, performance of ablutions, muttering prayer or *mantra* (*Japa*), oblations to fire, observance of a sacred vow, worship of gods and Brāhmaṇas and gifts donated in the names of manes, gods, men and creatures bear everlasting fruit.

26. Oh King, *Śrāddhas* should be performed when it is the time of the purificatory rites observed in the behalf of himself, his wife or children; as well as at the time of the cremation of a dead body or on the death anniversary of a person; and at the time of any other function like marriage.

27. Now I shall narrate to you the (holy) places which enhance religious merits and other good. That is the most sacred place where a worthy and virtuous recipient is found.

28. For he (such worthy recipient) is the very image of the Almighty Lord in whom abides the whole creation—mobile and immobile. That is the hallowed spot where Brāhmaṇas characterised by penance, knowledge and kindness dwell.

29. All the places where the image of Hari or Śāligrāma is found (or wherever the worship of Lord Hari is being done) that place is the abode of blessings; and the regions through which rivers like the Gaṅgā and others celebrated in Purāṇas flow.

30. And lakes like Puṣkara and others are situated; and places inhabited by venerable sages and spots known as Kuru-kṣetra, Gayā, Prayāga (the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā) the hermitage of Pulaha known as Śālāgrāma Kṣetra.

31. Forest like Naimiṣa (modern Nimsar) Kanyātīrtha (Cape Comerin), the holy bridge built by Rāma at Rāmeśvara, Prabhāsa, and Dvārakā, Vārāṇasī, Mathurā, the lake Pampā and Bindusara where stood the hermitage of Kardama the father of Kapila.

32. The Hermitage of Nārāyaṇa (Badarikāśrama), the Alakanandā, Citrakūṭa where stood the hermitage of Rāma and Sītā and such other places; all principal mountain ranges such as Mahendra (Eastern Ghāṭs), Malaya (Western Ghāṭs) and others, Oh King.

33. Those are the sacred-most spots where the idols of Hari are installed. He who is desirous of blessings, should constantly sojourn at these places. Righteous duties per-

formed here yield fruits thousand times more than what accrues at other places.

34. The foremost judges of worthy recipients and wise people have decided that in this world Hari and Lord Hari alone is the only worthy recipient. Oh Lord of the earth, everything mobile and immobile is constituted of him.

35. Accordingly, Oh King, even though gods, sages, worthy persons, such as the sons of god Brahmā and others were present at your Rājasūya sacrifice, Lord Kṛṣṇa was conclusively selected as deserving the first place in the adoration at the sacrifice, owing to his worthiness.

36. The great tree in the form of the universe (Brahmāṇḍa) is crowded with multitudes of *jīvas* and is very extensive, but Acyuta, being the root of that tree, Hari's worship brings gratification to all the *jīvas* and to one's own soul.

37. The dwellings (bodies) in the form of those of men, sub-human beings, sages and gods have been created by him. He dwells in these bodies in the form of *jīva* and hence he is called Puruṣa (the Dweller of habitations or Inner Controller).

38. In these bodies, the Lord is present (i. e. manifests himself) in different degrees (of intelligence, wisdom etc.). Hence, even though every man is a worthy recipient, he is proportionately so according to the manifestation of the Soul (i. e. spiritual wisdom, penance etc.) in him.

39. Oh King, wise sages took into account the mutual hatred, disregard among men in the Tretā and other ages, and have therefore instituted Hari's idols for worship, and other religious duties.

40. Some persons with perfect devotion in the worship of Hari propitiate him thereby, but to some the worship of Hari, even though performed, is not fruitful as they hate the Lord in the form of his creation.

41. Oh Lord of Kings, even amongst men Brāhmaṇa is regarded as the really worthy recipient as he bears in him the body of Hari, viz. the Vedas, along with the virtues of penance, learning and contentment.

42. Oh King, the Brāhmaṇas who purify the three worlds by the dust of their feet form really the Supreme Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the Soul of the universe.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Exposition of right Conduct (Concluded).

Nārada said :

1. Some Brāhmaṇas (*grhasthas*) are devoted to rituals prescribed for their particular *āshrama*, some (*vānaprasthas*), are bent on performing austere penance, others (*brahmacārins*) to the study of the Vedas, some to the teaching and exposition of the Vedas, while some to spiritual enlightenment, (as in the case of *saṁnyāsins*) and some to perfection in *Yoga*.

2. A person desirous of attaining eternally lasting merit should offer the gifts of food etc. intended for manes—(*pitrs*) and those meant for gods, to persons who are solely devoted to spiritual knowledge, and in their absence to others according to their merits.

3. One should feed two Brāhmaṇas in rites connected with gods, three for ceremonies (*Śrāddha*) intended for (*pitrs*) or may feed one only in each. Even though a person is very affluent, he should not invite a large number.

4. If invitations are given on a large scale, and food etc. is distributed among relatives, conditions regarding proper place, time, piety, devotion, proper materials, worthy recipients etc. are not properly observed.

5. When proper time and place offers itself, food proper for sages and offered to god Hari, if given with proper formalities and devotion to a worthy person, yields desired objects and everlasting fruit.

6. While distributing food to gods, sages, *pitrs*, beings and one's relatives, one should look upon these all as identical with the Supreme Person.

7. A person who knows the essence of *dharma* should not give (serve) flesh (non-vegetarian food), nor should eat it at the time of *Śrāddha*, for there is no real gratification in slaughter of animals (flesh); for there is supreme satisfaction with the type of food proper for sages.

8. For those persons who desire to follow the right course of conduct, there is no supreme *dharma* other than

abstinence from violence to living beings caused by thought, word and deed.

9. Some persons who are well-versed in sacrificial lore and who have spiritual wisdom, become desireless and offer the ritualistic sacrifices requiring external actions, into the fire of self-control kindled by spiritual knowledge.

10. Living beings become apprehensive on seeing a person who performs sacrifices with gross materials. (They say) "This cruel man, not grasping the spirit of the rules prescribed for *Tajñas*, and thirsting after my life, will surely kill me".

11. Therefore, a person knowing the real path of righteousness should be satisfied with the hermit's fare providentially obtained by him, and should every day carry on the prescribed daily and occasional duties.

12. A man versed in righteousness should steer clear of the five forms (branches) of *adharma* (impiety), viz. *vidharma*, *paradharma*, *ābhāsa*, *upamā*, *chala*, regarding them all as *adharma* (impiety).

13. *Vidharma* is that which, though practised as a *dharma*, obstructs real *dharma* (e.g. black-magic of the *tantras*). *Paradharma* is the course of conduct ordained for another (*varṇa* or *āśrama* (e.g. Fighting in the case of Brāhmaṇas). *Upadharma* is the heresy opposing the Vedas (e.g. path or duties prescribed in *āgama*) or hypocrisy, while *chala* is the distortion of the text showing apparent conformity to the letter of the scriptures or quibbling.

14. The course of conduct different from the duties (prescribed by Vedas for different *varṇas*—classes in society—and *āśramas*—stages in life) but adopted according to one's fancy (e.g. the *avadhūta* mode of life is (*dharma*-) *ābhāsa*. Who would regard *dharma* which is agreeable to his innate disposition, as not conducive to his (inner) peace and prosperity !

15. An indigent person should not try to earn money either for the sake of charitable donations etc. or for the maintenance of his life. Effortless state of one who ceases from activities becomes his means of subsistence, as in the case of the (proverbial) Python.

16. How can the happiness enjoyed by a self-contented person cherishing no desires and delighted in his own self, be obtained by a person who, actuated by passion and covetousness, runs in all directions in quest of wealth.

17. All directions are full of happiness to a man who is ever contented in his mind, just as the feet protected by shoes have complete safety against gravels, thorns and others.

18. With what will not a self-contented man pull on—say even with water? Due to beggarly yearnings for the pleasures of the sex and tongue, a man behaves like a dog.

19. The spiritual power, learning, (power accrued from) penance, and glory of a discontented Brāhmaṇa leak away (and are exhausted) and his spiritual knowledge is also dissipated.

20. A person may cease to feel the sexual urge due to intensity of hunger and thirst (as these are much more powerful), he may see the end of anger when its fruit (revenge) is achieved. But he never sees the end of avarice even after conquering all the quarters and enjoying the sovereignty of the world.

21. There are a number of learned scholars of extensive knowledge, capable of dispelling the doubts of others and leaders of assemblies who have fallen down (into deep hell) through discontent.

22. One should overcome passion by foregoing the desire of love for it, anger by eschewing desire; greed, by looking upon wealth and worldly things as evil; and fear, by the perception of the truth (about the objects of fear).

23. (He should conquer) grief and delusion by realizing the distinction between the Self (*ātman*) and the non-self (*anātman*); hypocrisy, by association with the great; interruption to *Yoga* (mental concentration) by observing silence; and violence to other beings, by bodily inactivity (to secure merit, wealth etc.).

24. He should overcome troubles given by other beings by cherishing compassion (even towards the trouble-makers); and those caused by destiny or gods by equipoise and concentration of the mind; the ailments of the body by the force of

Yoga (*prāṇāyāma* and other *Yogic* expedients); and sleep by recourse to *sāttvic* food.

25. He should vanquish *rajas* and *tamas* by *sattva*, and *sattva* by complete withdrawal of attachment (and activity for it). A man can easily overpower all these above-mentioned through intense devotion to the spiritual preceptor.

26. The spiritual guide is verily the Venerable Lord Himself who imparts to a man the light of knowledge. But the spiritual knowledge or learning of a person who entertains the perverted notion that his preceptor is an ordinary mortal, is as useless as the bath of an elephant (which besmears itself with dust immediately after the bath).

27. For the spiritual preceptor whom people regard as merely a human being, is directly the Almighty God, the Supreme Ruler both of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (matter and the individual Soul) and His feet are sought after by masters of *Yoga*.

28. All the precepts ordained (for performance of sacrifices etc.) are intended for one purpose, viz. restraint of six passions (e.g. desire, anger and others or alternatively five senses and the mind). If they do not lead to the accomplishment of *Yoga* (viz. *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā* and *samādhi*) all the above is a source of sheer (fruitless) labour.

29. Just as the rewards and procurements of agriculture and other pursuits do not bear the fruits of *Yoga* (viz. Final Emancipation from *samsāra*), the performance of sacrifices and undertakings for public welfare (e. g. construction of tanks etc.) will lead to evil results in case of a person whose mind is attached to external objects (of worldly nature).

30. He who has resolved to subjugate his mind should dissociate himself from all attachments and belongings; he should become a recluse and live alone in secluded place, eating moderately what he gets as alms.

31. One should arrange his seat in a clean hallowed level place and seat himself in an erect, stable, comfortable posture, repeating silently the sacred syllable Om, Oh King.

32. With his gaze fixed on the tip of his nose one should control one's breath (*prāṇa* and *apāna*—inhalation and exhalation) by inhaling, suspending and exhaling his breath till his mind gives up desires.

33. A wise man should retrieve his ever-roving mind smitten with desires from whatever external object it goes and confine it into his heart.*

34. A recluse who strives to exercise such control day and night, finds in a short period that his mind attains quiescence like fire for lack of fuel.

35. When the mind, not agitated by desires and passions, and with its activities calmed down, is touched by the ecstasy of the realization of the Brahman, it never responds to external objects in *samsāra*.

36. If a recluse who has formerly renounced his house which is a nursery of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* (three objects of human life) again takes to the householder's life and enjoys them, the shameless fellow (is like a man who) is swallowing up his vomited food.

37. If those who have regarded their own body as distinct from Soul, mortal and reducible to excrement (if the body is eaten up by a carnivorous animal), worms (if interred in a grave), and ashes (if cremated on a pyre), highly extol it as if it is the *Ātman*, such persons are the vilest ones.

38-39. Avoidance of religious rites and duties in the case of *grhastha*, non-observance (of the vow of celibacy, studies etc.) in the case of a *brahmacārin*, residence in an inhabited locality in the case of ascetics performing penance, and lack of self-control in the case of recluses (*saṁnyāsins*)—all these are the accursed banes of their respective *āśramas* as these certainly reduce their *āśramas* to mockery. Out of compassion, one should neglect these fellows who are deluded by the illusive power (*Māyā*) of the Almighty God.

*

- (1) *Sucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthīram āsanam ātmanah /
nātyucchritam nātinīcam cailājīnakulottaram //*

B.G. 6.11

- (2) *Samāṁ kāya-tīro-grīvaṁ dhārayannacalam tīraḥ /
sampsrekṣya nāsikāgraṁ svasthā dīścānavalokayan //*

B.G. 6.13

- (3) *Yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthīram /
tas tato niyamyaitad ātmanyeva vaśam nayet //*

B.G. 6.26

40. If a person realizes his Self as Supreme Brahman, all the traces of attachment are shaken off from his mind by that spiritual knowledge. (It is not known) with what ulterior motive or for whom does this addict to worldly pleasures nourishes his body.

41. The wise say that this body is a chariot, the senses are the horses, mind, the controller of senses¹, is the reins, the objects of senses are the paths, intellect (reasoning faculty) is the charioteer, and the heart (power is the all-embracing cordage created by God).

42. The ten vital breaths² from the axis, *Dharma* and *Adharma* its two wheels, the Soul who identifies himself with the body due to Ego (*ahamkāra*) is the owner (occupant) of the chariot. They say that the sacred syllable OM is the bow³, the pure Self is the arrow and Paramātmān (the Supreme Soul) is the target.

43-44. Love, hatred, greed, sorrow, infatuation, fear, pride, haughtiness, disgrace, jealousy, deceitfulness, violence, envy, passion, negligence, hunger, sleep—these and the like are the enemies to be vanquished. These are born of *rajas* and *tamas* and rarely from *sattva*. (At the time of concentration of the mind, the appearance of ideas of doing good is also a distraction and hence inimical.

45. While yet he continues to hold the chariot in the form of human body with all its constituent parts (the sense organs) under his control, he, deriving his strength from Lord Viṣṇu, and wielding the sword of spiritual knowledge sharpened through the service of the highly exalted Souls, should put an end to all the (aforesaid) enemies. Enjoying to his utmost satisfaction the highest bliss of the Self, he should attain (perfect) tranquillity and cast off this (body).

1. *ātmānam rathinam viddhi Sarīram ratham eva tu /
buddhim tu sārathim viddhi, manaḥ pragraham eva ca /
Indriyāṇi hayānāhur viṣayānś teṣu gocarān //*

—Kāṭha Upa. 1.3.3-4

2. They are: Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Vyāna and Udāna, Nāga, Kūrma, Kṛkālā, Devadatta and Dhanañjaya.
3. Cf. *Prāṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā—Muṇḍaka Upa. 2.2.4.*

46. Otherwise, these wicked horses in the form of senses and the (feeble) charioteer take the careless and unwary occupant astray to the path of *Pravṛtti* and land him among a band of robbers, viz., objects of sense-enjoyment. Those robbers hurl him among with the horses and the charioteer in the deep well of blinding darkness in the form of *samsāra* beset with the terrible fear of death.

47. Acts prescribed in the Vedas are of two kinds : *Pravṛtta* (leading to enjoyment of worldly life) and *Nivṛtta* (leading to spiritual life). By performance of *Pravṛtta karma* a person is born again in *samsāra*, while by *Nivṛtta karma* he attains to immortality (*Mokṣa*).

48-49. Ritual (like *Śyena-yāga*) to destroy the enemies and sacrifices involving slaughter of animals, *Agnihotra* (maintenance of daily domestic sacrificial worship), *Darśa* (sacrifice to be performed on the New Moon day), *Paurṇimāsyā* (sacrifice on the Full Moon day), *Cāturmāsya* (a sacrifice to be performed at the beginning of a quarter—four monthly division—of the year), animal-sacrifice, Soma-sacrifice, *Vaiśvadeva* (oblations to the *Viśvadevas* offered before taking meals) and *Bali-haraṇa* (symbolic offer of food to demigods, household divinities, men and other creature) are known as sacrificial acts; while construction of temples, gardens, tanks or wells and booths supplying water to men and animals, form (what is known as) *Pūrta* acts. Both of these (*iṣṭa* and *pūrta*) are included under *Pravṛtta karma*.

50-51. (The gradual ascension of the departed soul is marked by the subtle modifications of materials of his astral body *liṅgaśarīra* which is supposed to be escorted by the deities presiding over), the smoke, the night, the dark half of the month, the *dakṣiṇāyana* (representing the Sun's apparent movement to the South of equator), the orb of the Moon. (After enjoying the fruit of his action, the path of descent of that *jīva* is through) the New Moonday, annual plants and creepers, food grains and the semen (resulting thereby)—this is the *path of Pitṛs* which leads to birth again. Having gone through these stages one by one, a *jīva* is born again in this world¹.

1. The belief in the journey of the Soul by the Path of *Pitṛs* (*pitṛ*).

52. A twice-born person (viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya) who is consecrated with the sixteen purificatory rites from *garbhādhāna* to the funeral obsequies, oblates all his activities as sacrifice into his five cognitive senses kindled by the light of spiritual wisdom.

53. He offers (i.e. merges) the senses into the mind or the thinking faculty full of thoughts, the mind born of *Vāikārika* (*sāttvic*) *ahamkāra* into the Speech; the speech into the body of articulate sounds (which go to form Speech), and that collection of sounds into *Praṇava OM*; he should merge that into *Bindu*, the *Bindu* into *Nāda*, the *Nāda* into *Prāṇa* (vital breath) and *Prāṇa* in the Supreme (*Brahman*).

54-55. The path wherein the progress is watched by deities presiding over Fire, the Sun, the Day Time, the Evening (close of the day), the bright fortnight, the full Moon day, *Uttarāyaṇa* (the period when the Sun appears to move to the North of the equator), god *Brahmā*.¹ (*Brahmā*'s region marks the highest point in the ascent of the departed Soul. After the termination of the person of enjoyment in the *Brahma loka* he proceeds to) *Viśvu* (when the Soul identifies himself with gross matter), *Taijasa* (wherein the Soul merges the gross into the subtle *upādhi*, and with his subtle *upādhi* is absorbed into *Kāraṇa upādhi* he becomes) *Prājña*, (after merging of *Kāraṇa upādhi* he becomes) the *Turiya* (when he is mere witness of all the states) —all these stages being absorbed into one he becomes Pure Self, i.e. is liberated. This path is known as the path of gods (*deva-yāna*). Going through these stages serially, this propitiator of the (Supreme) Self being established into the Supreme Self attains to perfect tranquillity and never returns (to *samsāra*)²

yāna) is very old. In fact the above verses echo *verbatim Chāndogya Upa.* 5.10. 3-6.

Also : *Dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ saṁmāsā dākṣiṇāyanam /
tatra Cāndramasam jyotir Yogi prāpya nivartate //*

—B.G. 8.25.

1. *agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ saṁmāsā uttarāyaṇam /
tatra prayāṭā gacchanti Brahma Brahma-vido janāḥ //*

—BG. 8.24.

2. VJ. states that every higher stage is more blessed than the former. When he ultimately attains to the Supreme Self, he becomes established in perfect bliss whence there is no return to *Samsāra*.

56. He who, through Śāstric point of view, distinctly and correctly understands these paths of *Pitṛs* and gods as created by the Vedas, does not get deluded¹ (and does not fall down to a lower stage in life), even though he still abides in this (physical) body.

57.* For, the knower of the path factually constitutes whatever exists before the creation and after the extinction of the body; he himself is whatever is outside the body (external world to be enjoyed) and inside the body (the enjoyer of the world), what is high and low, knowledge and the object of knowledge, the world and the object denoted by it, darkness as well as light.

58.** Just as a reflection, though logically disproved in everyway, is supposed to be something real, so objects which are cognised by senses are imagined to be really existent. But their objective reality is difficult to be proved.

59.*** (Here the unreality of the body is logically proved). This "shadow" (-like psycho-physical organism called

1. Is not attached to either of the paths—S.D.

* VR. : Before the creation and after the destruction of the universe in and out of the living beings during the tenure of the universe whatever exists high or low, consciousness (*Jīva*) and the insentient things to be known, the word and the thing described darkness (*Māla Prakṛti*) and light (*Samaṣṭi-jīva*)—these all are *Paramātman*.

** VR. interprets *ābhāsa* as (1) the visible physical body and (2) the body in the dream state and gives two explanations:

(1) The actual body though continues to be undestroyed does not deserve to be regarded as *Puruṣārtha*. So are the objects of senses, unworthy of pursuit as objects of human life (*Puruṣārtha*).

(2) Just as the body in the dream state disappears at the time of waking, so is the body in the waking state unreal as the eternal qualities of the Soul are not found therein.

B.P. and S.D. seem to accept this interpretation.

VJ states the *dvaita* point of view as follows:

The body which is *pratibimba* is (as per *smṛti* texts) *Vastu* as the Supreme Self, abides in it. The body and other objects have a real existence as god and nobody else can create them.

*** VR. : The shadow of trees etc. which are products of the elements like the earth and other elements is neither their collection nor modification; it is neither apart from the tree nor connected with it but is impermanent (*anitya*); so is relation of the body and the *ātman*. The body is not the *ātman*.

VJ. interprets *chāyā* as an aspect of state. He explains, "As none else but god has created everything in this universe it is real; for the *bhūtas* are neither a collection, compound or the modification of other *bhūtas* e.g. the earth or water etc.

body which is regarded as a combination of five elements such as the earth and others) is nothing of (unrelated to) the earth and other elements; for it is neither a collection or a mixture nor a compound or modification. It is neither of them separately or conjointly. Hence, it is unreal.

60. (He now shows that the constituents making up the body are unreal). The ingredients or “the roots” of the body, viz. the five gross elements being themselves composed of components, cannot exist apart from their subtle forms (*tan-mātras*) which form their components. And when the whole i.e. combination of constituents) proves to be unreal, the parts (or constituents) *ipso facto* cease to be real.

61. Objection : In case the existence of an individual *avayavin* is denied, the identity of the same individual at different stages in life or periods of time cannot be recognized. The reply :

When there is no difference in Paramātman, it is through similarities between the successive appearances that the mistake in identification will take place while the influence of *avidyā* survives. The force of Śāstric injunctions and prohibition is similar to the distinction between wakefulness and sleep, both perceived during the dream-stage¹.

62* A contemplative sage who, through the realization of the Self comprehends the unity of *Bhāva*² (thought), *Kriyā*² (action) and *Dravya*² (materials) of the *ātman*, shakes off the three dreamy states, viz., wakefulness, dream and sleep.

63. Bhāvādvaita (non-duality of thought) is the comprehension of the essential one-ness of cause and effect like that in the thread and cloth (woven out of thread), their difference being unreal.

64. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira (son of Pṛthā Kuntī) ! The resignation of all acts performed through the instrumentality of

1. VR. : The injunctive and interdictory orders in the Śāstric texts may be binding till this body lasts, just as the distinction between the state of wakefulness and sleep in dreams lasts till the dream continues.

2. The terms are defined in the following verses.

* VJ. : A sage who comprehends the meaning of *Śāstras* knows the identity (*advaita*) in *Bhāva*, *Kriyā* and *Dravya*.

thought, words and deeds directly to the Supreme Brahman himself, is the *Kriyādvaita* (non-duality of action).

65. The *Dravyādvaita* (non-duality of substances) is the realization of *artha* and *kāma* (wealth, property and desire) of one's own self and his wife, children as well as all other embodied beings.

66. Except in the case of calamity (i.e. normally) one should perform one's duties with the materials the acquisition of which is permitted by whatever means, from whatever source and at whatever time and place, (to the man's class and stage in society).

67. Oh King! He who abides by these and other duties prescribed for him in the Vedas and is deeply devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa, attains to the Lord's realm (or state of godhood) even though he be staying at home.

68. Oh King of kings! Just as you (and your brothers) tidied over a series of unsurmountable difficulties by the grace of the Lord and have performed sacrifices after conquering the guardian-elephants of all quarters, so you may cross over this *samsāra* through the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the saviour of all.

69. In the previous Mahākalpa, I was born as a Gandharva named Upabarhaṇa and was highly respected among the Gandharvas.

70. Being an amiable person with beautiful appearance, comeliness, sweet in speech and fragrance, I was a favourite with women. I was always intoxicated and extremely lascivious.

71. Once upon a time, in a sacrifice performed by gods Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and Apsaras (heavenly damsels) were invited by the Prajāpatis (Lords of creations) to chant verses in honour of Lord Hari.

72. On coming to know of that invitation, I, in the company of women, went there (drunk) singing (profane songs). Being informed of my contemptuous conduct the creators of the universe cursed with their ascetic power: "Being bereft of your glory, do you be born instantly as a Śūdra, as you have behaved disrespectfully."

73. At first I was born of a female-servant. Even in that birth through my reverential service to and association

with sages who had realised Brahman, I became (lit. attained the status of being) Brahmā's son.

74. The righteous course of conduct prescribed for house-holders and which is capable of destroying sins, has been described to you in details. Following this course, a householder easily attains to the goal of a *saṁnyāsin*, viz. *Mokṣa* (Liberation).

75. In this world you are certainly highly fortunate inasmuch as sages who sanctify the world come to your house where the Supreme Brahman disguised in a human form resides (with you).

76. This (Lord Kṛṣṇa) is verily the Supreme Brahman who is the embodiment of the realization of the ecstatic bliss of eternal emancipation which is sought after by great sages. This venerable Lord is your beloved friend, maternal cousin, your most adorable preceptor, your (very) Soul, and the executor of your commands.

77. May this Lord of Sātvatas (Lord Kṛṣṇa) be propitious unto us—Lord Kṛṣṇa whose essential form (nature) could not be adequately (comprehended and) described with their intellectual faculties even by great gods like Śiva, Brahmā and others, and who is worshipped by us in silence, devotion and tranquillity.

Śrī Śuka said :

78. Hearing the above discourse of the divine sage Nārada, the foremost one of Bharatas (Yudhiṣṭhira) was highly delighted and overwhelmed with devotional love worshipped Kṛṣṇa.

79. The sage who was duly worshipped, took leave of Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira. Yudhiṣṭhira was highly amazed to learn that Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Brahman.

80. Thus the genealogy of the different dynasties of the daughters of Dakṣa have been severally described to you, and gods, Asuras, human beings and other mobile and immobile creation in the world are included in these (dynasties).

SKANDHA EIGHTH

CHAPTER ONE

Description of Manvantaras

The King (Parikṣit) requested :

1. Here (in the 7th book) I have heard from you, in details, the history of the dynasty of Svāyambhuva Manu in which were born the progenitors of the universe like Marīci and others and their progeny. Now relate to us, Oh preceptor, the history of other Manus¹.

2. Oh Brahman ! Be pleased to relate to us who are (eagerly) listening, the history of all those Manu-epochs (wherein) wherever the incarnations and great exploits of Hari, the greatest of the great, are sung by the wise.

3. Do you also tell (in details), what Lord Hari, the creator and protector of the universe has accomplished in the past Manvantara, is doing in the present one, and will work in the Manu-epochs to come, Oh Brahman.

The sage (Śuka) replied :

4. In this current *Kalpa* (—Brahmā's day), six Manu-epochs beginning with Svāyambhuva have elapsed. Of these, the first Manvantara (Svāyambhuva) has been described to you, along with the creation of gods and other creatures, during this period.

5. The Lord incarnated as (Yajña) the son of (Svāyambhuva) Manu's daughter Ākūti to enlighten her in the righteous path and as (Kapila) the son of (the same) Manu's daughter Devahūti for imparting spiritual wisdom.

1. GS. adds :

v.l. the second half of this verse :

atra dharmās' ca vividhās' cāturvarṇyā'śrīdāḥ subhāḥ /

Here various courses of righteous and auspicious duties pertaining to four *varṇas* are described.

6. I have previously (in Skandha III) narrated to you the work done by venerable Kapila. I shall (now) relate to you, Oh Chief of Kurus, what the glorious Lord Yajña did.

7. Being indifferent and unattached to sensual enjoyment, and having abdicated his kingship, Lord Svāyambhuva Manu, the spouse of Śatarūpā, entered the forest, along with his queen, to practice penance.

8. Touching the ground with one foot (standing on one leg) for one hundred years, on the bank of the Sunandā, he practised terribly austere penance, Oh Bhārata, and chanted the following (prayer :).

*Manu said**

8A. With his vision uninterrupted, this Vāsudeva dwells in all bodies. He does not perceive the (evolution, continuance and dissolution of) universe with the help of another. He is the cause of the (sentient and nonsentient) universe. Hence his vision (and power of controlling from within).

9.** By him the universe is endowed with consciousness, but unto whom (none in) the universe (can) impart consciousness. He remains awake (as a witness) while the universe is in sleep (even during *Pralaya*). No creatures can know him but he knows all. (He is the *ātman*).

10.*** Whatever is animate (and inanimate) in this uni-

* The next verses are based on Upaniṣadic texts and are known as *Mantrapariṣad*.

** It is the Sun which prompted by Hari gives light and heat to the universe, and from which, *tapas*, the root cause of all power becomes possible. Even the Sun does not know Lord Hari who remains awake while it (the Sun) sets. But Hari knows it fully—VJ.

*** (i) Everything sentient and insentient in the universe has been penetrated and controlled (from within) by the Supreme Soul who is its main support. Do not think that there is anything absolutely independent of and existing separately from Him. Everything belongs to Him. Do not covet for anything as it depends (for its very existence) upon Him only.—VR.

(ii) The whole of the universe (beginning with the Sun) consisting of the created and yet-to-be-created mobile and immobile objects in the range of *Prakṛti*, is the abode of the Lord (who is their creator). Therefore,

verse,—the whole universe is pervaded by the Supreme Soul. Therefore you should make your living by whatever has been allotted to you by him (or what is given to you, after offering it to him¹). Do not covet another person's riches.²

11. Resort to the self-illuminating Lord who is the abode (the Inner Controller) of all beings and yet unconcerned and aloof from them like *Suparṇa* (or the bird of beautiful wings, the symbol of *Ātman*, the companion of *jīva* in *Upaniṣads* like the *Muṇḍaka* 3.1.1), whom though he sees all, no eye (created being) can see (as he is beyond sense-perception), and whose vision (knowledge) never vanishes, (as he is knowledge incarnate).

12. The attributes like beginning, middle and the end cannot be predicated of him (being present in all), he has none that is his own or as belonging to another. (Being all-pervading) the distinction of 'in-ness' and 'out-ness' is not-applicable to him. All these stages (of creation, subsistence and destruction) are attributable to the universe which is his manifestation. Hence, he is the Reality, the supreme truth, the great Perfect Brahman.

13. He (the Supreme Being) has the universe as his body (or he contains the universe within himself at the time of the Deluge) He has innumerable designations. He is the Absolute Ruler, the Supreme Truth, self-effulgent, uncreated, eternal ancient Being. By his (*Māyā*) Potency, which is also uncreated, he brings about the creation (sustenance and destruction) of this (universe). By his eternal knowledge and wisdom, he sets aside *Māyā* and remains actionless (in his original state as *Brahman*).

14. (As the Lord initiates action e.g. creation of the universe etc. just to return to actionlessness) so the sages wish

Oh mind, be satisfied, maintain yourself with whatever has been given to you by Him. Do not covet for His omniscience and absolute blissfulness. Nor long for what the Lord has given to another person—VJ.

(iii) Everything in the universe is created by the Lord for His sport. Even if you possess abundant wealth, maintain yourself like a worker getting his wages after giving the 1st priority to His service (and that of His devotees). —VC.

1. . . . Even the wealth in your house belongs to God—GS.

2. This is a *verbatim* reproduction of *Iśa Upa.* 1.

to undertake the religious duties with the object of attaining to actionlessness¹ or Liberation (*Mokṣa*). For, a person who performs actions (dedicating them to the Lord) generally attains to *Mokṣa* (lit. stage of actionlessness).

15. The Supreme Lord of glorious powers engages himself in acts, but is not attached to them, for through realization (of the blissful nature) of his Self, he has all his objects achieved. Hence, those who follow him do not come to grief.

16. I (Svāyambhuva Manu) take shelter in the Almighty Lord who (out of grace) engages himself in activities (such as creation etc. of the universe or follows the path of Veda in his incarnations as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc.) yet is absolutely free from egotism as he is full of wisdom. Being Perfect, he is above all cravings (for blessings etc). Being himself the Master, he is not impelled by others; he is yet steadfast in the path of action (according to the incarnation taken by him) as he has to set an example to people and he is the exponent of the path of righteousness

Śrī Śuka said :

17. Seeing him thus repeating the *Mantropaniṣad* (the mystical prayer based on *Upaniṣadic* texts) in meditation, Asuras and Rākṣasas fell upon him to devour him out of hunger.

18. The all-pervading Hari in the form of Yajña, seeing them determined to kill Manu, killed them with the help of gods known as Yāma (who were his sons), and ruled over the Heaven (as the Indra thereof).²

19. The second Manu was Svārociṣa, the son of Fire God. He had Dyumat, Suṣeṇa, Rociṣmat as his prominent sons.

1. v.l. *Karma-hantave* : for the destruction of *karmas*.

2. Bh.P. 12.7.15 mentions that each Manvantara is presided over by a Manu as its head, a group of gods (the Manu's sons), an Indra, seven sages and an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. Thus in the first Manvantara Svāyambhuva (the son of Brahmā) was the Manu; the gods were known as Yāma; Yajña was the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu who officiated as Indra also; and the seven sages were Marici, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vasīṣṭha.

20. There Rocana was the Indra, and the gods were (his sons) Tuṣita, and others (Toṣa, Pratoṣa, Santoṣa, Bhadra, Śānti, Iḍaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva, Rocana as listed in the fourth Skandha). The seven sages, well-versed in the Vedas and the knowledge of Brahman, were Ūrja (son of Vasiṣṭha), Stambha (son of Kāśyapa) and others (prāṇa, Bṛhaspati, Datta (son of Atri), Atri, Cyavana as enumerated in the *Harivaṃśa*).

21. From the sage Veda-Śiras and through his wife Tuṣitā by name, the Lord Viṣṇu was born and was well known as Vibhu.

22. Eighty-eight thousand sages who have undertaken the vow of austerities, followed his vow of celibacy, as he was celibate since boyhood.

23. The third Manu was by name Uttama, the son of Priyavrata. He had sons prominent among whom were Pāvana, Sṛñjaya, Yajñahotra, Oh King.

24. In that Manvantara, Pramada and other seven sons of Vasiṣṭha were the seven sages. The three groups of gods were Satya, Vedaśruta and Bhadra, and Satyajit was the Indra.

25. The glorious Supreme Lord was born from Dharma through his wife Sunṛtā and became known as Satyasena. Satyavrata gods were also born along with him.

26. As a friend of the Indra Satyajit, he killed wicked Yakṣas and Rākṣasas who practised hypocrisy and were of bad character, and also the hosts of evil spirits who harmed living beings.

27. The fourth Manu was by name Tāmasa, and was the brother of Uttama. He had ten sons such as Pṛthu, Khyāti, Nara, Ketu and others.

28. In the Manvantara called Tāmasa, the gods were of three groups, Satyaka, Hari and Vira, and the Lord of the Heavens was Trisikha, and the seven sages were Jyotis, Dhāma and others (namely Pṛthu, Kāvya, Caitra, Agni, Dhanada, and pīvara according to *Harivaṃśa*).

29. The gods were called Vaidhṛti, as they were the sons of Viṭhṛti, Oh King. They, with their own intellectual

power, retained the Vedas which were lost in the course of time.

30. In that Manvantara was born Lord Hari from Harimedhas through Hariṇī, and he rescued the big elephant from the grip of an alligator.

The King Requested :

31. Oh son of Vyāsa, we are desirous of hearing from you how Hari delivered the abovementioned King of Elephants seized by the alligator.

32. Wherever the Supreme Lord Hari of most hallowed renown is sung, that story is extremely sacred, praiseworthy, auspicious and contributory to our welfare.

Sūta said :

33. When the son of Vyāsa was urged to continue the narration by King Parīkṣit, who had determined to die of starvation, Śuka congratulated the king with delight and continued (his narration) in the assembly of sages who were listening with rapt attention, Oh Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER TWO

The Elephant Leader seized by the Alligator

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh King, there was a mountain well known as Trikūṭa. The beautiful mountain was ten thousand *yojanas* in height and was surrounded by the milky ocean.

2. It was wide on all sides to the same extent as its height. It had three peaks of gold, silver and iron (respectively) wherewith it illuminated the milky ocean, the cardinal points and the sky.

3. (It stood radiating its charms) in all directions by its other summits which were variegated (in colours) with precious stones and mineral ores, and were covered with clusters of

trees, creepers and shrubs of various kinds, and was resounded with the cascades of mountain torrents.

4. With its feet washed by the waves of milk on all sides, it makes the earth appear dark-green with its rocks and pebbles of emeralds.

5. Its valleys were resorted to by sporting *Siddhas*, *Cāraṇas*, *Gandharvas*, *Vidyādhara*s, big serpents, *Kinnaras* and *Apsaras* (celestial nymphs).

6. While its caves were resonant with the echoes of the music (of *Kinnaras* etc.), proud lions suspecting it to be due to the presence of a rival lion, impatiently roared back in indignation towards them.

7. It appeared picturesque (lit. was adorned) with valleys infested with herds of wild beasts of various kinds. In its celestial gardens abounding in a variety of trees, birds of sweet voice were warbling.

8. It appeared beautiful with streams and lakes of crystal waters, with banks covered with (sparkling) sand of jewels and precious stones. Their waters became highly fragrant by the bathing of celestial women in them, and the breezes blowing over them were charged with sweet scent.

9. In one of the valleys of that mountain, there is a garden called *Rtumat* belonging to the glorious highsouled god *Varuṇa*, which was the sporting ground of celestial ladies.

10-14. On all sides, it was adorned with celestial trees ever laden with fruits and blossoming flowers such as *Mandāras*, *Pārijātas*, *Pāṭalas*, *Aśokas*, *Campakas*, mangoes (of various species), *Priyālas*, bread fruit (Jack-fruit) trees, *Amrātakas* as well as with *Kramukas* (arecas), cocoanut trees, date-palms, *Bījapūrakas* (citrons), *Madhūkas*, *Śāla* trees, tala (palmyras) *Tamālas*, *Asanas*, *Arjunas*, *Ariṣṭas* (soap-berries) *Udumbaras* (Indian fig trees), *Plakṣas*, banyan trees, *Kiṃśukas*, sandal trees, Neem trees, *Kovidāras*, *Saralas* (pine trees?), *Deodars*, grape vines, sugar-canes, plantains, rose-apples, plum-trees, *Akṣas*, the yellow myrobalan, Emblic myrobalan trees and was surrounded by *Bilva*, *Kapittha* (wood apple tree), *Jambīra*, *Bhallātaka* (the marking-nut plant) and others. In that garden there was an extensive lake resplendent with golden lotuses.

15. It looked excellently beautiful with the splendour of

lilies and various species of lotuses such as *Utpala*, *Kalhāra* and *Śatapatra* (white, blue and ordinary types). It was resonant with (the ceaseless) humming of intoxicated bees and with melodious notes of warbling birds.

16. It was swarmed with aquatic birds like swans, ducks called *Kāraṇḍava*, ruddy geese (*Cakravāka*) and cranes. It was resounded with the cries of water-fowls *Koyaṣṭis* and *Dātyāka* (the gallinules).

17-19. Its waters were covered with filaments of lotuses shaking with the movement of the fishes and tortoises. It was surrounded with trees and plants such as *Kadambas*, canes, *Nalas* (a variety of reed) and *Nīpas* (a kind of *Kadamba*), *Vaṇjulaka*, *Kurbaka*, *Aśoka*, *Śirīṣa*, *Kuṭaja*, *Aṅguda*, *Kubjaka*, *Svarṇa-yūthi* (yellow jasmine), *Nāga*, *Punnāga*, *jātis*, *millikā*, *Śatapatras*, *Mādhavi* *Jālaka* and other creepers.

It appears superbly beautiful with other trees growing on its banks, and bearing fruits and flowers throughout all seasons.

20. Once upon a time, there came in that garden the leader of a herd of elephants dwelling in the forest over the mountains. It was ranging about in the company of female elephants breaking and treading down thorny shrubs and clusters of various types of bamboos and canes (on their way).

21. Even at the scent of that King-elephant, lions, big elephants, carnivorous animals like tigers, rhinoceroses, huge serpents, white and black *Śarabhas* (an extinct animal more powerful than the lion), *Camariś* (female yaks) take to flight through sheer terror.

22. It is by its sufference that weaker animals like wolves, boars, bison, bears, porcupines, baboons, hyenas and monkeys as well as the deer, hares range about without fear.

23-24. The elephant which was exuding the temporal fluid as a consequence of which he was attended by swarms of blackbees feeding on that intoxicating fluid, was surrounded by (a herd of) elephants, male and female, and was followed by their young ones. Being oppressed with the heat of the Sun, and scenting from a distance the breeze blowing from the lake—(and hence) laden with the pollen of lotuses—he, with

his eyes rolling under intoxication and accompanied by his herd, all panting for water, speedily approached the vicinity of the lake, shaking by its huge weight the mountain on all its sides.

25. Plunging into the lake, he, with the tip of his trunk, drank to his fill the translucent, nectarlike water perfumed with the pollen of golden and blue lotuses. Bathing himself with the waters of the lake, he became refreshed.

26. The proud yet compassionate elephant, like unto a house-holder, made his female mates and young ones drink water and bathe, spraying them with the cool water by means of his trunk. Being deluded by the *Māyā* power of the Lord, the poor creature could not foresee the (impending) peril.

27. There, some powerful alligator, directed by the will of the Providence, indignantly caught hold of the elephant by the leg, Oh King. Finding himself caught up into this calamity by the will of the Lord, the mighty elephant exerted himself to his utmost capacity (to extricate himself from the hold of the alligator).

28. Noticing that the leader of their herd is being dragged with powerful force, and is rendered helpless, the female elephants, with their minds perplexed, began merely to shriek. The other elephants, though helping him from behind and sides, did not succeed in their attempts to rescue him.

29. In this way, while the mighty elephant and the powerful alligator were struggling, the former trying to drag the other outside the water and the latter pulling him inside, one thousand years rolled by. Finding them equally powerful, even the gods marvelled greatly at this (tough fight).

30. In this way, due to his being dragged into the water and harassed for a very long period, the energy, strength and vitality of that king elephant became greatly depleted, while the very reverse of it took place in the case of the aquatic animal (the alligator).

31. When that mighty elephant, dependent on his physical strength only thus found himself in the peril of life and absolutely helpless and incapable of rescuing himself, he pondered over for a long time, and through the will of the Lord, arrived to the following conclusion.

32. "These elephants, my own kinsfolk are not able to liberate me in this plight. What to speak of these poor she-elephants ! Caught up and bound down as I am in the snare of the Providence, in the form of this alligator, I shall now approach the Supreme Lord who is the last resort of all.

33. We seek refuge in that indescribable Supreme Lord through fear of whom even the (God of) Death flies away, and who, when resorted to as an asylum, protects in every way the affrighted fugitive, vehemently pursued with irresistible force by the mighty serpent (in the form) of Death."

CHAPTER THREE

The Liberation of the Mighty Elephant

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having thus decided by force of his reason and concentrated his mind within (the region of) his heart, he began to repeat mentally the (following) prayer which he learnt by heart in his previous birth (as Indradyumna).¹

The Lord of Elephants Prayed :

2. (Due to my leg being caught by the alligator) I can but mentally offer my salutations to the glorious Lord denoted by the sacred syllable OM—the Lord who is the source of animation to all this intelligent (and non-intelligent) creation, who enters all bodies as their cause both as *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* and who is the Supreme Lord of all (including great gods like *Brahmā*).

3. I seek asylum unto the Self-created Being in whom this universe exists and from whom as the natural course, it is evolved and by whose instrumentality it is brought about and

1. Vide *infra* Ch. IV. 7-12.

who constitutes the universe itself,¹ but who is totally different from and transcendental to this phenomenal existence (the effect) as well as its cause (*Prakṛti*).

4. May the self-illuminating Lord protect me—the Lord who is beyond revealing agencies (such as the eyes etc.) as their illuminator; Who as a disinterested witness, observes with his unobstructed vision, both the cause and the effect, this universe superimposed on him by his deluding potency (*Māyā*) both in its occasional manifested form (at the time of the creation) and the occasional unmanifested form at the time of destruction).

5* When, due to the force of time (the period of two *parārdhas*, the life-period of *Brahmā*), all the (fourteen) worlds along with their guardian deities are reduced to the state of five gross elements (of which they are constituted and when all the causes (viz. the principles such as the *Mahat*, *ahamkāra* upto gross elements) become dissolved (into *Prakṛti* or Primordial matter), there prevailed (nothing but) profound incomprehensible and unfathomable darkness (called *Prakṛti*. May that Omnipresent Lord who through its *Prakṛti*'s substratum) is not affected by it and who sheds his lustre all round (even beyond that darkness) protect me.

6. Not even gods and sages (with all the predominance of *Sattva guṇa*) could comprehend his real nature. How is it possible for a creature (like me dominated by *rajas* and *tamas*) to understand and describe it? (To gods, sages and us) his nature and course of conduct is difficult to understand and

1. Though Hari and the universe are different, He is identified with it as the universe is under His perfect control; Who is superior (and transcendental) to this phenomenal world as well as from those who have attained Liberation—VJ.

*VR. : *tamas*—the extremely subtle sentient material (*cid-dravya*) that exists after the dissolution of the universe (*tamaḥ śabdaḥ niratīṣaya-sūkṣma-daśāḥ cid-dravya-vācī*). So also BP.

Para abhivirājate—The Lord, as a controller of this *tamas* or subtle composite principle, exists in His glory. VR. derives *para* from *Pṛ* to protect.

VJ. : *Para abhivirājate*—Who through His form called Time, stays self-refulgent in the region least affected by and thus beyond *tamas*

JG. : —*Para*—In the great *Vaikuṇṭha* regions.

describe, like the real identity of an actor playing different roles to an ordinary spectator. May he rescue me.

7. My asylum is that Lord for the realization of whose most auspicious nature, the exceedingly pious contemplative sages, have given up all attachment (to their wives, children and also to objects of senses like sound, fragrance etc.) and having identified their Self with the Self of all beings and thus being benevolently disposed to all, perform in a faultless manner extraordinary austerities (such as *Brahmacarya*—celibacy and others) in the forests.

8. The Lord is not conditioned by birth (as a consequence of past actions). He has no *Karma*—(bondage), no name or form (as a result of past *Karmas* as in the case of ordinary beings). However, for the sake of creation and destruction of the world, he assumes them from time to time by his *Māyā*-Potency (or will Power).

9. I bow again and again to that Supreme Lord, the Brahman of infinite potencies, Who, (though) devoid of forms, possesses innumerable forms and performs miraculous activities.

10. I pay obeisance to the Lord who is self-luminous (and as such requires no other light to reveal him); who is the witness (and hence the revealer) of all; and the controller of all beings; I bow to him who is absolutely beyond the ken of speech, mind and its powers.

11. Salutations to him who can be realized by the wise, through purity of the mind developed by cessation (of activities or dedication to the Lord) of *Karmas*, (and by observance of *nivṛtti* (*dharma* characterised by devotion); Who is the Lord (and hence the bestower) of *Mokṣa* and who is the blissfulness of the final beatitude *incarnate*.

12* I bow to him who assumes the (three) attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and appears as serene, terrible, and immersed in ignorance; who is devoid of differentiating characteristics, equal to all, and an embodiment of pure consciousness.

*VJ. classifies the various incarnations of Viṣṇu on *guṇa* basis and offers them salutations. He regards the last epithet—*jñānaghana*—as a refutation of the formlessness of Viṣṇu (*arūpasya jñānatoṣaṁ nivārayati*)

13* I bow to you who are the controller of all, the only knower of the psycho-physical organism (called *kṣetra*), a witness (to everything). You are the source of all Jīvas, and even that of *Prakṛti* (the primordial cause) as you exist before all.

14. I pay my obeisance to you, who perceive all senses along with their objects; who are indicated (as the basis) by all cognitive activities; whose existence is suggested by the shadowy, unreal phenomenal existence (*ahamkāra* and other principles) like that of a material body by its reflection, as it is you who are reflected in every phenomenon.

15. I bow again and again to you who are the cause of everything, but yourself are without a cause; who are the wondrous cause (inasmuch as you produce the effect—viz. assuming the form of the world—without undergoing any change in you); who are the great ocean wherein all *Āgamas* (like the *pañcarātra*) and the Vedas meet (and are directed to you); who are the embodiment of *Mokṣa* (Liberation) and (hence) the ultimate resort of the great.

16.** I salute to you who are the fire of knowledge and consciousness lying hidden in the *Araṇi* (the pieces of wood for kindling sacrificial fire by friction) in the form of *guṇas*; whose will (to create the universe) manifests itself through the commotion (caused by the disturbance in the equilibrium) of *guṇas*; who, out of your own will, reveal yourself to those who, (through the renunciation of *Karmas* or dedication of *Karmas* to God), meditate on the true (nature of the) soul and have risen above the prescriptions and prohibitions enjoined by *Āgamas*.

VR: *interprets*:

Salutations to you who (at the time of the destruction of the universe) have drunk up (withdrawn within you) the fire of the aggregate of all *jīvas* lying hidden in the *Prakṛti*

* Salutations to You to Whom the *kṣetrajñā* (individual soul) is like a body, the Supreme Ruler of all beings, the Witness to all; Who are the Inner Controller (of all); and Who are self-existent (not created by any other cause) and are the primary material cause (of all) as well.—VR.

** VJ. reads a combination of vv. 16 and 18.

(constituted of three *guṇas*); whose will to create begins to function (at the time of the creation of the world) leading to the commotion in *Prakṛti* and *jīvas*; who grants Liberation (*Mokṣa*) to his votaries; whose being beyond the comprehension of speech and mind, stands self-revealed.

17. Hail to you who are yourself not only eternally free, but who, out of boundless grace, promptly¹ (without any idleness in such matters) and absolutely sever the bonds of *Avidyā* or *Saṁsāra* which have fettered creatures like me, (now) completely submitted to your mercy. I bow to you who, by a part of your being, exist in all embodied beings as their inner controller² and are capable of directing them all, even though you are infinite (and spatially unlimited)

18. Bow to you who (though the inner controller of all beings) are difficult to be attained by persons who are attached to their bodies, sons, kinsmen, household, wealth and people, as you are devoid of any association with *guṇas*. You are constantly meditated upon in their hearts by souls unattached to their bodies, etc. I bow to you who are an embodiment of pure knowledge, the most omnipotent Ruler of all.

19. May the Lord of infinite mercy (at least) rescue me (from the clutches of the alligator or *Saṁsāra*)—The Lord, by worshipping whom persons desirous of religious merits, sensual objects, affluence, wealth or Liberation (from *saṁsāra*), gain not only their coveted goal but also have other unexpected blessings and undeteriorating (divine) body conferred upon them.

20. His votaries of unflinching constant devotion and even those who have taken refuge with the Lord (or His devotees full of spiritual wisdom) do not seek any boon (from him), but are immersed in the ocean of bliss, while singing his most miraculous and auspicious deeds.

21. I offer my hymn of prayer unto that absolutely perfect imperishable First Principle, the all-pervading highest

1. *ālayāya*—By resorting to whom the devotee never meets destructions—VR.

2. *Suāṁśena sarvatanubhṛt* etc.: Who are realized as being identical with the *jīva* in the heart of every being as the *jīva* is essentially a part of your body—VR.

Brahman, the Supreme Ruler (even of great gods like Brahmā), unmanifest and beyond the range of senses, as it is very remote and subtle, yet is accessible (to his devotees) through internal (path of *bhakti*) *yoga*.

22-24. May the Lord, manifest himself (for my Liberation)¹—

22. The Lord by whose single minutest modicum of energy (all the) gods headed by Brahmā, the Vedas, the worlds, the mobile and immobile creation of distinct (yet) infinite variety of forms, are created.

23. From that self resplendent Lord issues forth (and is again withdrawn) the stream of *guṇas*² and their products such as the intellect, the mind, the senses and aggregates of gross bodies (like those of gods and others), even as sparks and flames go forth from the self-shining Fire-god and rays emanate from the self-luminous sun and are withdrawn again into them constantly.

24. Verily he is neither god nor demon; neither a human being nor a sub-human creature (a bird, a beast etc.); he is neither a female nor a male nor an important person or an a-sexual being; he is neither an attribute (*guṇa*) nor an action (*Karma*); he is neither effect nor cause; he is the substratum of what is left after negating these all and yet constitutes them all (by his *Māyā*).

25. I do not wish (to get my body) extricated from the clutches of the alligator and) to survive here (in this body). What interest have I with this elephant-life which is enveloped internally and externally with the darkness of ignorance? I crave for emancipation (lifting up of) from that Veil of ignorance which shrouds the spiritual light of the Soul, and which cannot be destroyed merely by (lapse of) time but only by the knowledge of the (*Ātman*).

1. (i) May remove all obstacles in my God-realization—VR.
(ii) May relieve me from the misery of *samsāra*—VJ. (iii) SD., GD., BP. follow ŚR.

2. This asserts the eternality of the stream of the universe (*guṇa—sampradhāḥ...anena jagat-Pravāhasya nityatvam jñāpitam*)—VJ.

26* Being thus desirous of getting liberated I (who do know the Lord) simply bow down to that all pervading spirit, who is the creator of the universe; whose body is the universe and yet who is beyond and other than it; who uses the universe as his instrument, yet is the soul of it (as its Inner controller); who is unconditioned by birth and is the highest resort of all.

27. I have bowed¹ unto the Lord of *yoga* (who confers the fruit of *yogic* practice), whom the *yogins* visualize in their hearts purified by burning down of their *Karmas* by *yoga* (or devotion unto the Lord).

28. I salute to you again and again. The force of your three-fold power (of three *Guṇas* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) is irresistible; who manifest yourself as the object of all senses; who protect those who have resorted to you for shelter and are of unfathomable powers; whose path is inaccessible to those whose senses are directed to external objects.

29. I have sought the protection of the Lord whose glory is unsurpassable and enveloped by whose *Māyā* power expressed as the ego-sense, this *Jīva* does not realize (the real nature of) his self.

Śrī Śuka said:

30. When all these gods like *Brahmā* and others who identified themselves with their special forms and attributes (such as four-headedness, three-eyedness in the case of gods *Brahmā*, *Śiṣa* etc.) did not approach (to rescue) the Lord of elephants who thus glorified the Supreme Lord as being devoid of (and hence without any reference to) any particular form or attribute,² Lord *Hari*, being the Soul (*ātman*) of all,

* Being desirous of removing the veil of ignorance that obscures the vision of the soul, I bow to You Who are the Wealth or the highest goal in the life (of people) in the universe, who enter the universe to protect it: Whose manifestation is not conditioned by *Karmas*, yet is full of good attributes; Who are absolutely inaccessible I merely bow to Him as I do not know any other way of propitiating Him—VR.

1. The yogic way being now impossible I can simply bow to Him—VR.

2. And as he has under-rated gods like *Brahmā* in verse 22 above—GS.

and the embodiment of the aggregate of all gods, manifested himself there.

31. Knowing that the elephant was in that distressed condition and having heard his hymn of prayer (mentally addressed to him), the Lord, the abode of the universe, equipped with his weapon the discus *sudarśana* and riding *Garuḍa*, the embodiment of the (*sāma*-) *veda* (and capable of ranging anywhere with any speed according to his will) and accompanied by celestials singing his praise, instantaneously appeared on the spot, where the Lord of elephants was (in that wretched plight).

32. Beholding in the sky Lord Hari, seated on *Garuḍa* and with his discus upraised (in his hand), the elephant, though greatly distressed, as he was seized by a very powerful alligator inside the lake, lifted up his trunk holding a lotus (as an offering for worshipping his feet!) and uttered with great difficulty the words "Oh glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa !" the Father (or Preceptor) of all the universe ! I (reverentially) bow to you."

33. Seeing the elephant greatly afflicted, Lord Hari, the birthless God (feeling the speed of *Garuḍa* as too slow) at once alighted (from *Garuḍa*), and immediately dragging out the elephant out of the lake along with the alligator, out of compassion, rescued the lord of the elephants from its jaws by rending them open with the discus, while gods stood simply looking on.

CHAPTER FOUR

Liberation of the Lord of Elephants

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Then (seeing the rescue of the lord of elephants), gods headed by Brahmā and Śiva, sages and Gandharvas extolled that mighty deed of Hari, and discharged a shower of flowers on him.

2. Celestial kettle-drums were sounded, the Gandharvas danced and sang; sages, Cāraṇas and Siddhas eulogised the Supreme Person.

3. Verily, he who was (till then) the alligator, instantly assumed the most wonderful form. He was Hūhū, the foremost among the Gandharvas, who was thus redeemed from the curse of the Sage Devala.¹

4. He bowed down to the eternal Supreme Lord of excellent renown with his head, and he chanted the praise of his worth extolling (innumerable) virtues and sacred episodes of that abode of glory.

5. Being favoured by the Lord with his grace, he was purged of all sins. Going round the Lord (reverentially) and paying him obeisance, he repaired to his own region (of Gandharvas) in the very presence of all the people.

6. By virtue of his being touched by the Lord, the lord of elephants became completely free from the bondage of ignorance, and attained to the form resembling that of the Lord (*Viṣṇu*) clad in yellow garments and endowed with four arms.

7. It is traditionally reported that he was in his previous birth a king of the Pāṇḍya-country wellknown as Indradyumna—the foremost among the Draviḍa people—and devotedly attached to the austere observance of Viṣṇu-worship.

8. Once upon a time, the king who, as an ascetic, wearing matted locks of hair, was staying in his hermitage on the Malaya mountain, had undertaken the vow of silence. At the appointed hour of the propitiation of the Lord, he took his bath and began to worship with due formalities, the imperishable supreme Ruler, Lord Hari.

9. (It is reported that) by chance there arrived (at his hermitage) the celebrated sage Agastya accompanied by hosts

1. ŚR. narrates the cause of the curse as follows:—Once while Hūhū was indulging in watersport with his women in a lake, the sage Devala entered the same lake for bath. Hūhū was upset and he pulled Devala by his leg. The sage cursed him to be an alligator. When entreated, Devala advised him to seize the lord of elephants that way, so that Lord Hari will emancipate him and he would be reinstated to his original position automatically.

of his disciples. Finding Indradyumna seated in solitude and remaining silent (without showing the courtsey of greeting orally) and without paying the due homage (usual formalities of receiving a guest of honour) the sage flared up in rage.

10. He pronounced the following imprecation on the king : "This sinful, uncultured, wicked soul has today insulted a Brāhmaṇa (like me). He is dull-witted like an elephant. Let him be born in the species of elephants steeped in blinding darkness of ignorance."

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Oh king ! Having uttered this curse, the venerable Agastya went way along with his followers. The royal sage Indradyumna, on his part, considered the incident to be the will of the Providence.

12. He entered the species of elephants which obscures the knowledge of the self. But by virtue of his propitiation of Hari the reminiscence of his past life remained unblurred (even while he was an elephant).

13. Having thus rescued the lord of the ~~best~~ of elephants and accompanied by him ~~after elevating~~ him to the position of his attendant, ~~the~~ lotus-navelled god (Viṣṇu) seated on ~~Garuda~~ repaired to his region Vaikuṇṭha, while Gandharvas, Siddhas and gods were glorifying his miraculous feat.

14. This glorious deed of Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), viz. The Liberation of King of elephants, has been narrated to you by me, Oh great king. Listening to this leads to heaven, confers glory, removes the sins of the Kali age and destroys the effect of bad dreams of the hearers, Oh great Kuru.

15. Persons belonging to the twice-born castes desiring to secure their welfare, get up early in the morning, and purifying themselves (after taking a bath) recite this sacred narration (of the liberation of the elephant king) for obliterating the effects of bad dreams (and securing their welfare).

16. It was while all creatures were listening that the Omnipresent Lord Hari who embodies all creation, being highly pleased with the Lord of elephants, addressed the following (words) to him; Oh the best of Kurus.

17-24. Rising up at the close of the latter part of the night i.e. at dawn (known as *Brāhma muhūrta*), and after purifying themselves (by taking a bath), those who, with concentrated mind, remember me, you, this lake, the mountain (*Trikūṭa*) along with its caves and valleys and the forest (covering them), the clusters of canes and *Kicaka* bamboos, the heavenly trees, the (three) mountain peaks, the abodes of *Brahmā*, *Śiva* and myself, the ocean of milk, my favourite resort, the resplendent *Śveta-dvīpa* (My beloved place), the *Śrivatsa* mark (the characteristic curl of hair) on my breast, the *Kaustubha* gem, and the garland known as *Vaijayantī*, my weapons, the mace called *Kāumodakī*, the discus *Sudarśana*, the conch *Pāñcajanya*, my vehicle *Garuḍa*, the king of birds, Lord *San̥karṣaṇa* who is my subtle emanation, goddess *Śrī* (*Lakṣmī*) who rests on my bosom, god *Brāhmā*, the divine sage *Nārada*, god *Śiva* and (my devotee) *Prahlāda*, and all my deeds performed during my incarnations as Fish, Tortoise, Boar and others—listening to which confers infinite merit (to the hearers), the Sun-god, the Moon-god, the Fire-god, the sacred syllable OM, the Eternal Truth, the unmanifest (*Prakṛti*), Cows and *Brāhmaṇas*, the eternal path of religion (consisting of devotion unto the Lord, the daughters of *Dakṣa* who are the wives of *Dharma*, *Soma* and *Kaśyapa*, the rivers—the *Gaṅgā*, the *Sarasvatī*, the *Nandā*, the *Yamunā*, the White elephant of *Indra* (*Airāvata*), *Dhruva*, the Seven *Brāhmaṇa* Sages and great men of hallowed fame, (such as *Nala*, *Yudhiṣṭhira*, *Janaka*, the king of *Videha*)—all these being my forms, those who remember them, become free from all sins.

25. Oh dear *Gajendra* ! To those who, after getting up at dawn (after the expiry of night), pray to me with the hymn (composed by you), I promise to keep their memory unclouded at the time of their death.

Śrī Śuka said :

26. Having addressed thus, Lord *Viṣṇu* (the Lord of senses) blew his excellent conch (*Pāñcajanya*) gladdening thereby the host of gods and mounted his carrier *Garuḍa*, the king of birds.

CHAPTER FIVE

Description of V and VI Manvantaras—Brahmā Hymns the Lord.

Śrī Śuka said :

1. I have narrated to you, Oh King, the sacred story of the liberation of the Lord of elephants which destroys all sinful deeds. Now listen to the account of the Manu-period presided over by Raivata.

2-3. The fifth Manu, Raivata by name, was the brother of Tāmasa. Bali, Vindhya and others, the eldest of whom was Arjuna, were his sons. Vibhu was the Indra, Bhūtaraya and others were the gods, while Hiraṇyaroṃā, Vedaśiras, Ūrdhva-bāhu and others were the Sages¹, Oh king.

4. Vikunṭhā was the wife of Śubhra; with a portion of his energy, Lord Vaikuṇṭha was born of these of his own accord, along with great gods known as Vaikuṇṭhas.

5. It was at the request of his spouse, the goddess Ramā (Lakṣmī) and with a view to please her that he created his realm known as Vaikuṇṭha² which is highly respected by all the worlds.

6. His prowess (viz. restoring to their original position his attendants who, by the curse of Sanatkumāra, became demons called Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu—vide Skandha III), excellences (such as friendliness to Brāhmaṇas), and his great prosperity have been described to you. (But I could not do so adequately as) he who would be able to describe the excellences of Viṣṇu fully may as well count all the particles of the dust on the entire earth.³

7-8. The sixth Manu was known as Cākṣuṣa, the son of Cakṣus; his sons were Puru, Puruṣa, Sudyumna and others. Mantradyumna was the Indra, and the hosts of gods were headed by Āpya. The (seven) Sages were, Oh king, Haviṣmat,

1. GS quotes Harivaṃśa and gives Devabāhu, Sudhāman, Parjanya and Mahāmuni as the names of the remaining (seven) Sages of the *Raivata Manvantara*.

2. GS adds : The Vaikuṇṭha region being eternal, its 'creation' is 'manifestation' only.

3. An echo of RV. 1.154. *Vide infra* 8.23.29.

Viraka and others (viz. Sumedhas, Anuttama, Madhu, Atināman, Sahiṣṇu).

9. In this Manvantara, the glorious Lord of the worlds appeared, by a ray of his essential nature, as Ajita, the son of Vairāja and Sambhūti.

10. By him, the nectar as secured for gods, by getting the sea (of milk) churned, while he supported, in the form of the (Divine) Tortoise, the Mount Mandara while it was whirling in the waters of the sea.

The King enquired :

11-12. Be pleased to describe to me Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage, this most wonderful deed of the glorious Lord : as to how the ocean of milk was got churned by the Lord, as also the object (said) of doing so, and why he had to support the mount (Mandara) assuming the form of an aquatic animal (a tortoise); how the nectar was obtained by gods and what else happened at that time (in connection with this event).

13. My heart which has been tormented for a long time by afflictions (of three types) does not get satiated, when you describe in details, the great glory of the Lord of Sātvatas (Kṛṣṇa).

Sūta said:

14. Being thus respectfully requested, the vénéable son of Vyāsa (viz. Śuka) appreciated the (king's) query and began to describe in details the prowess of Lord Hari, Oh Brāhmaṇas.

Śrī Śuka said :

15-16. When formidably assailed with sharp weapons by Asuras in battles, gods were killed in large numbers, and they did not revive, and when due to the curse of the sage Durvāsas,¹

1. ŚR & GS mention the following incident (from the *Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*) as the cause of the curse. Once while the sage Durvāsas was wearing a garland gifted to him by Lord Viṣṇu, Indra riding his Airāvata elephant, passed by him. Out of courtesy and with a view to bless Indra with permanent sovereignty of the three worlds, Durvāsas presented the garland to him. Out of arrogance, Indra threw it on the

the three worlds along with Indra were deprived of their glory and wealth, all sacrificial performance and other religious rites ceased to be performed.

17. Seeing this (state of affairs), the hosts of gods headed by the great Indra and Varuṇa met in a conference for mutual consultations, but failed to arrive at a conclusion.

18. All of them went to the court of Brahmā, situated on a crest of mountain Meru. Bowing god Brahmā humbly, they submitted to him all their grievances.

19-20. Observing that gods like Indra, Vāyu and others are bereft of power, energy and splendour and the people (practically) devoid of auspiciousness, and the Asuras (proportionally) better-off, he, with a concentrated mind contemplated the Supreme Person, and with a cheerful countenance, the great Venerable Brahmā addressed the gods as follows:

21. "Let us all—I who am but a portion of the Lord, and Asuras, human beings, sub-human creation like birds, beasts, trees and sweat-born beings (like lice, bugs etc.) who are the progeny of Marīci (and others) who in turn are just a modicum of his energy approach for refuge to him, the imperishable Lord.

22. According to his view-point, none deserves to be killed or protected; no party is worth neglecting or supporting. It is for the creation, subsistence and destruction of the world that he assumes the attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* at the proper time.

23. And the present is an opportune time for his creation and protection of the universe for which he has assumed the Sattva attribute for the creation of embodied beings. Let us therefore, approach the Preceptor of the world for protection. Being beloved of gods, he will do whatever is good for us, his devotees."

Śrī Śuka said :

24. Having thus spoken to the gods, god Brahmā, accom-

panied by his elephant. The animal in its turn, lifted it from its head and trampled it under its feet. Seeing the gift of the Lord so treated, Durvāsa got enraged and cursed him to be bereft of wealth along with his kingdom of the three worlds.

panied by celestials, went directly to the abode of the unconquerable Lord which lies beyond the region of darkness, Oh destroyer of enemies.

25. There, with the concentration of all his senses (including the mind), he, in the divine (or Vedic) language, addressed the following hymn of praise, to him whose essential form was not seen as yet, but about whom much was heard formerly, Oh king.

Brahmā said :

26. "We bow to the Supreme God, Who is changeless, eternally true, infinite (in time and space), beginningless, present in (everybody's) heart, unconditioned, incomprehensible quicker than the mind and beyond the range of words (indescribable).

27. We go (as a refuge) to him Who is the knower of the vital airs, the mind, the intellect and the soul; Who appears as senses and their objects; Who is devoid of sleep and is bodyless (and hence) imperishable; Who is all-pervasive like the sky, and is unaffected by the darkness of *avidyā* and the sunshine of *Vidyā*;¹ Who is free from desire and other attributes of *Jīva* and who manifests himself in every *Yuga*.

28. I seek asylum in that Deity, the Truth, which the Vedas call as the axle (the main support) of the lightening-like fast rotating wheel of life (i. e. This ever-changing body and other accessories of the Soul), owned by the *Jīva* (who is, in reality birthless). The wheel is propelled by *Māyā* (the beginningless deluding potency of the Lord). It (the wheel) has mind as its chief component and consists of fifteen spokes (viz. Ten sense organs and five vital breaths—*prāṇas*), three navas (viz. the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and eight fellies* (in the form of eight-fold *Prakṛti* consisting of five elements, the mind, the intellect and the ego).

1. VJ.—*gṛdhra*—covetous of everything, hence *jīva* who like vulture has two wings, viz. *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*.

* VJ. regards deva, asura, humans and other classes of beings as the fellies.

29* Let us bow to him Who has seated himself by the side of Jīva (as the Inner controller) or Who is seated on Garuḍa¹ ever ready to protect his devotees; Who is essentially pure bliss or knowledge², beyond the range of darkness or Prakṛti; Who is invisible, beyond the range of all *lokas*; Who is changeless and limitless in time and space; to whom wise men resort through (the chariot in the form of) the discipline of *Yoga*.

30. Let us pay obeisance to the Supreme Ruler Who treats all beings alike (without any partiality); Who has subdued his Māyā along with the (three) *guṇas*—the Māyā which nobody could cross and which has deluded the people so much (that identifying themselves with their bodies) they do not know their true self.

31.** Even we, gods and sages who are created by his favourite body consisting of pure *sattva*, are unable to comprehend his subtle essence, though it is manifest as Light within and as existence without. How (is it possible that) Asuras and others who are dominated by other attributes viz. *rajas* and *tamas* can do so?

32. (Henceforth the *vairāja* form of the Lord is eulogised). May that Lord, the Supreme person, the veritable, absolute Brahman itself, be propitious unto us—The Lord who has created as his feet, this earth which supports the four-

* VJ : I seek refuge in the supreme Deity Who is represented by the syllable (OM); Who is beyond the darkness of ignorance and *prakṛti*. It is beyond the ken of the world, un-revealed and limitless (or comprised of innumerable syllables). Intelligent persons worship and meditate upon Him with great devotion. He is seated on His vehicle the *jīva*.

ananta-pāram (i) Being an embodiment of the Vedas He cannot be comprehended by words and their connotations (ii) He is all pervading yet cannot be seen anywhere by all. They contemplate Him as an *antar-yāmin* (inner controller)—SD. SD interprets *a-Loka* as 'The realm of A i.e. Viṣṇu, Hence Vaikuṇṭha.

1. *upa-suvarṇam*—who occupies a region full of light like gold—VR.

2. *eka-varṇam*—

(i) Constituted of Pure Sattva—VR, JG.

(ii) Who is constituted of the only one syllable OM—VJ, VC.

(iii) Constituted of Pure Bliss—GD.

**Though out of His grace He created us both inside and outside with His *sattva* attribute, we, the gods and sages, are unable to comprehend—VJ.

fold creation of beings¹ and yet is completely self dependent, and the Master of infinitely great powers.²

33. May that absolute and perfect *Brahman* of immense spiritual powers be gracious unto us—The *Brahman* whose seminal fluid is water, of so much enormous power that it became the source of existence, subsistence and prosperity of the three worlds, as well as all guardian deities.

34. May that Lord of unlimited spiritual glory be propitiated unto us—The Lord whose mind (as declared by the Vedas) is Soma, Who is the food and hence the strength and life of celestials, and Who (due to the nourishing power of his ambrosial rays) is the ruler of the vegetable kingdom and the creator of all living beings (as they subsist on the vegetables and plants).

35. May that most glorious Lord bestow his grace unto us—the Lord whose mouth is the Fire; Who is the source (and hence the bestower) of wealth, (or who takes to gods their respective oblations offered in sacrifices), and Who is engendered for (the performance of) sacrificial rituals (prescribed in the Vedas), and Who abides in the stomach (as the gastric fire) digesting the food, and in the sea (as submarine fire) consuming its (watery) subsistence.

36. May that Lord of infinite glory be propitious unto us—The Lord whose eye is the sun-god; Who is the presiding deity of the path of gods (*devayāna*) leading ultimately to Liberation; Who is the very personification of the triad of Vedas (viz. *Ṛk*, *Yajus* and *Sāman*); Who is regarded as the seat of Brahman (as Brahman is meditated upon in relation to the Sun); Who represents not merely the entrance to the path of Liberation but to immortality itself; Who (however as a symbol of Time) is death *incarnate* (as Time terminates everything.)

37. May the Lord of unlimited powers be graciously inclined towards us—The Lord from Whose breath was born *Vāyu* (the air) which is the vital air (*Prāṇa*), who animates the

1. *caturvidha-sargaḥ*—The four categories of beings are viviparous, oviparous, the sweat-born and the plant-world.

2. *mahā-vibhūtiḥ*—Having power over *Mahā-Lakṣmi*, the presiding deity of wealth. May all of us be affluent in every respect—GD.

mobile and immobile creation, and became their mental energy, physical power and potency of the sense-organs, and to whom, we, the presiding deities (of cognitive and conative senses) follow as the retinue goes after an emperor.

38. May that Deity of infinite glory confer favour upon us—The Deity from whose ears were evolved the cardinal points; from whose heart, the pores in the body, and from whose navel were created the (five) vital airs (*Prāṇa*), the senses and organs of the body (*Indriyas*), the mind and the other (five semi-vital airs¹ carrying on) the functions of the body and the sky which supports these all.

39. May the Lord of unlimited glory be favourably disposed to us—the Lord from Whose strength was born the great Indra, from Whose grace the (various) gods; from Whose wrath sprang up god Śiva, the Lord of mountains; from Whose intellect came forth god Brahmā; from the appetures in Whose bodies were created the Vedas and the sages, and from whose generative organ, the god Prajāpati.

40. May that most glorious Lord be propitious unto us—The Lord from Whose bosom came forth the goddess Śrī (the goddess of wealth and beauty); from Whose shadow, the manes (*Pitṛs*); from Whose breast, Dharma (the presiding Deity of righteousness) and from Whose back was born *Adharma* (the evil spirit of unrighteousness); from Whose head evolved the heaven (*svarga*), and from Whose sportive actions, the celestial damsels (*apsaras*).

41. May the Lord of supreme glory bestow his grace on us—The Lord from Whose mouth sprang up the Brāhmaṇas and Vedas of mystic significance; from Whose arms were born Kṣatriyas and the power (to govern); from Whose thighs came forth Vaiśyas and skill in business of agriculture and from Whose feet were born the Śūdras and the vocation of service (other than Vedic studies)²

42. May the Lord of infinite powers be gracious unto us—the Lord from Whose lower lip came forth avarice; from

1. These are *Nāga*, *Kūrma*, *Kṛkālā*, *Devadatta* and *Dhanañjaya* (vide Supra 3.6.9).

2. Śr notes v.1. *urvor viśaṅghrē abhavaṁśca śūdrāḥ* 'The Vaiśya class was born from His thighs and the Śūdras from His feet.'

Whose upper lip affection; from Whose nose emanated splendour, from Whose touch, the desire to rear up and to tend animals; from Whose eye-brows sprang up Yama, the god of death; from Whose eye-lashes was born the Time-spirit (Kāla).

43. May that most glorious Lord be graciously disposed towards us—The Lord by Whose *yoga-māyā*, the *śāstras* declare are created the five gross elements, the Time (Life-Span), the destiny (effects of acts of past life), qualities¹ (or the modes of *Prakṛti* e.g. *Sattva*, *rajas*) and this phenomenal world all of which are too difficult to comprehend, and which should be renounced by the wise as mere *māyā*.

44. I bow to him Whose energy (in the form of *guṇas* like *Sattva* etc.) is quiescent; Whose mind is thoroughly full of his natural supreme bliss, and hence Who is not attached (even in his mind) to the products of the *guṇas* created by *Māyā* and Whose sportive activities are like the air (which moves everywhere but is attached to nothing anywhere).

45. You being such (as described above), be pleased to reveal to us your lotus-like smiling countenance in such a way as it will come within the range of our sense of perception, for we have completely surrendered ourselves to you and are eager to have a look at you.

46. For the glorious Lord assumes different forms from time to time, according to his will (or the will of his devotees), and accomplishes feats which are beyond our capacity, Oh Omnipresent God.

47. In the case of embodied beings whose minds are attached to pleasures, their acts require great trouble (for performance) but bear little or no fruit at all (in return). But that is not the case with us who dedicate all our actions to you (We require less trouble to perform the act, and get substantial fruit in return, and it is never futile).

48. Even the slightest resemblance of action, if dedicated to the Lord, never becomes futile (but brings substantial results); for the Lord loves and wishes well of such person (who has resigned himself to him and his actions, therefore, will not be futile).

1. VJ. *guṇāḥ* etc.: devotion etc., or colours. The v.l. *vāśeṣam*—The Nature, Jīva, time etc.—VJ.

49. Just as watering the root of trees proves nourishing to its trunk and branches, similarly the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu leads to the propitiation of all gods and of one's self also.

50. I bow to you, the infinite Lord whose nature and deeds are extremely difficult to comprehend; you are devoid of all attributes, and yet are the master of all qualities, and who at present are established in *sattva*.

CHAPTER SIX

(Mount Mandara Transported for Churning the Ocean)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Oh king ! Thus praised by the hosts of gods, the glorious Lord Hari, the supreme Ruler, manifested Himself to them with the effulgence of a thousand suns rising simultaneously.

2. By that very glaring effulgence, all gods got their eyes so much dazzled that they could not perceive the sky, the cardinal points, the earth and even themselves. How could they see the omnipresent Lord ?

3. The glorious god Brahmā along with Śiva, beheld that immaculate Form, dark like emerald (blue like sapphire), with eyes reddish like the interior of a lotus.

4. It was clad in bright yellow silken garment (*Pitāmbara*) shining like burning gold, graceful and lovely in every limb, with beautiful countenance and attractive eyebrows.

5. It was adorned with a crown crested with highly precious gems and a pair of armlets (keyūras one on each arm); Its cheeks illumined by the bright splendour of the pendant ear-rings, added to the beauty of its lotus like countenance.

6. It was adorned with an ornamented girdle, bracelets, necklace and pair of anklets. It was wearing the deco-

rative *Kaustubha* gem, the goddess Lakṣmī, and a wreath of sylvan flowers (on its breast).

7. It was attended upon by its missiles like *Sudarśana* and others in their personal form. Brahmā, the foremost among the gods, along with god Śiva, and with hosts of celestials, lay prostrate before him on the ground, and eulogized the Supreme Person (as follows);

Brahmā said:

8.* I offer my obeisance again and again to you of whom birth, subsistence and destruction are beyond predication; who transcends the (three) *guṇas*; who is the ocean of (absolute) bliss attainable in the Final Beatitude; who is the subtlest of the subtle, yet whose glory is immeasurable and powers unlimited.

9. Oh Supreme Person! This form of yours is ever worthy to be adored by those who aspire after the (highest) bliss, through methods prescribed in the Vedas and *tantras* (like *pañcarātra*). Oh Creator and Protector of the universe! In this form of yours which pervades the universe, I see (simultaneously) all the three worlds as well as ourselves.

10. In you who are self-dependent, the universe abided in you at the beginning; in you, it exists in the middle and it will be absorbed in you (after its dissolution) in the end. Just as the earth persists (as the material cause) in the beginning, the middle and the end of a pot, similarly you are the beginning, the middle and the end of this universe.¹

11. Through your Māyā—potency which absolutely depends on you, you have created the universe, and subse-

*VJ : Again and again I salute to you who are *Aja* (Birthless-*Viṣṇu*), the creation, subsistence and dissolution of the universe, the very personification of various attributes (e.g. *Ānanda*, *Vijñāna*), the ocean of bliss impossible to those who identify themselves with the physical body, and of limitless glory.

1. VJ differs : According to VJ. God is not the material cause but the supreme cause on which other causes depend. The particle *ca* in VJ's text indicates that if Brahman be the material cause even non-sentient material world would be sentient. VR. accepts God as the material cause of the universe, but God is unaffected by changes (*upādānatve'pi tasya nirvikāratvam*),

quently have entered into it (as its Inner Controller). The thoughtful people who are well-versed in *Śāstras* and who have (controlled and) concentrated their minds, perceive through their mind that you are not affected by *guṇas*, even though you abide in them (i.e. in the universe which is the product of *guṇas* in which you have entered).

12. It is a well-known fact that, by adopting proper means, men get fire from wood (by friction of wooden pieces—*araṇis*), nectar i.e. milk from the cows, food and water from the earth (by agriculture and digging) and livelihood by working (in a profession or vocation), similarly thoughtful people, through their intelligence perceive You in (the world which is) the product of *guṇas* and describe you accordingly.

13. Oh Lord! Having seen You graciously (and thus fulfilling) our desire for a long time, we feel extremely blissful as elephants distressed by forest-conflagration do, on reaching the waters of the *Gaṅgā*, Oh Lord with a lotus in your navel.

14. Such as You are (as described above), do fulfill our desire for which we, the guardians of the Worlds have approached Your feet. Oh Lord (the pervader of the universe from inside and outside)! You witness everything. What is there to be made known to you from outside by others?

15. To You, I, Śiva, gods (and other beings), Dakṣa (and other Lords of creation)—We all are like sparks of fire emanating from fire (and appearing distinct from fire, though originally they are one). Separate as we are, what do we know of (the way to) our welfare? Oh Lord! Be pleased to advise us what may be beneficial to Brāhmaṇas and gods.

Śrī Śuka said:

16. Being thus prayed (and extolled) by Brahmā and others, and with a full understanding of their hearts, the Lord, in a voice like the rumbling of clouds, addressed the gods who, controlling their senses perfectly, stood with folded palms.

17. Although the Lord alone was capable to accomplish the object of the gods, he, being desirous of indulging in sportful activities like the churning of the ocean and others, addressed them as follows:

The Lord said:

18. Hello ! Brahman, Śiva, gods and demigods ! Listen attentively to my speech, so that all of you will attain welfare and desired object.

19. You do go just now and conclude a peace-treaty with the Daityas and Dānavas who are favoured by time, till you find that growth (prosperous time) has now returned (till Fortune smiles on you).

20. When an object to be achieved is important, an alliance should be entered into, even with enemies. When once, you have accomplished your purpose, you may behave as a serpent does with a mouse.¹

21. Without any delay, efforts should be made to produce the nectar, by drinking which a being in the jaws of death will become immortal.

22-23. Having thrown all kinds of plants, grasses, creepers and herbs in the sea of milk, and making mount Mandara as the churning rod and Vāsuki (the king of snakes) as the churning rope, you churn the ocean well assiduously with My help. The Daityas shall undergo the trouble of churning while you shall reap the fruit thereof.

24. Oh gods! You agree to whatever desire the Daityas express. All objects are not successfully achieved through anger (and confrontation), as through conciliatory methods.

25. You need not be afraid of the Kālakūṭa poison that will come out of the (churned) sea (for god Śiva will drink it). You should not evince any desire or covetousness (for the objects churned out) or express any anger if Daityas do so.

Śrī Śuka said:

26. After instructing the gods in this way, the glorious Supreme Person, the Ruler (of the universe) who acts according to his own free will, disappeared from their view, Oh king.

27. Having bowed down to the Venerable Lord (who

1. ŚR.—Just as a serpent caught in box by a snake-charmer formed friendship with a mouse outside (to make a hole into that box). When the serpent creeps out of that box, it eats up that mouse. Similarly you should behave now.

had disappeared), god Brahmā and Śiva returned to their respective regions, while gods approached Bali (the king of demons).

28. The praiseworthy king of Daityas who knew the opportune time when to wage war, and when to make peace, restrained his generals, who got excited at the sight of their enemies in that unprepared condition.

29. Then (the gods) approached Bali, the son of Virocana, seated (on a throne) and guarded by Asura generals, endowed with the highest royal splendour after the conquest of the three worlds.

30. The highly intelligent Indra consoled Bali with many soft words, and spoke to him everything as per briefings of the Supreme Man.

31. The (oral) proposal was acceptable to Bali and to other Asura rulers like Śambara, Ariṣṭanemi and other residents of Tripura who were present.

32. Then gods and Asuras reached an agreement, and after contracting a friendly alliance, they made great efforts for obtaining the nectar, Oh tormentor of enemies.

33. Then, being arrogantly proud (of their physical strength), they (gods and demons) forcibly pulled out the mount Mandara. Shouting lustily, they with their *Parigha*-like long and powerful arms, proceeded to take it to the sea.

34. Being thoroughly exhausted by carrying the heavy burden, Indra, Bali and other gods and demons became unable to take it any further and helplessly left it on the way.

35. While the mountain of gold was falling there, it crushed to death under its weight many gods and demons.

36. Knowing that they (gods and demons) had got their arms, thighs and necks broken and were dispirited and nervous, the Eagle-bannered Lord manifested himself there.

37. Having seen the gods and Dānavas (demons) have been crushed by the falling of the mountain, he, by his mere glance, restored gods to life as if they were unhurt.

38. Sportively, with one hand, he placed the mountain on Garuḍa, and mounting it (Garuḍa), he went to the sea surrounded by the hosts of gods and demons.

39. Having taken down the mountain from his shoul-

ders and placing it near the water (of the sea) Garuḍa, the best and foremost among birds, being discharged by Lord Hari, went his way.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Churning of the Sea for Nectar

Śrī Śuka said

1-2. They (gods and demons) invited Vāsuki, the king of serpents, agreeing to give him his due share in the proceeds (lit. fruit viz. nectar arising out of that churning). They bound him round the mountain (*Mandara*) like a churning cord. Joyfully yet with a firm determination, they began (to churn the ocean) for the nectar. At first, Lord Hari took hold of the head-side (of the serpent) and gods followed him.

3-4. The lords of the demons did not approve of this act of the Supreme Person. We, who have mastered the Vedic lore and *śāstric* studies and are well-known for our noble birth and deeds, will not hold the tail, that dirty, inauspicious limb of the serpent. (Protesting thus) they stood aloof in silence. Seeing that, the Supreme Person, smilingly left off the fore part (of Vāsuki), and took hold of his tail along with the gods.

5. Having thus defined their positions, the sons of Kāśyapa (both gods and demons), began to churn the sea of milk with utmost exertion, for the sake of nectar (*amṛta*).

6. Oh delight (descendant) of Pāṇḍu ! While the sea was being churned, the mountain being unsupported (from below), sank down into the water, due to its own weight, despite the efforts of the mighty ones (gods and demons) to hold it up.

7. Finding their manly efforts frustrated by the much more powerful Providence, they became extremely dejected at heart, and their countenances grew pale.

8. Noticing the set-back caused by the Lord of obstacles,

The Lord of infinite prowess and unfailing determination, assumed the wonderful form of a gigantic tortoise and diving deep into the water bore up the mountain (on its back).

9. Beholding the great mountain being so raised up, the gods and demons proceeded to churn up the sea. The Lord bore the mountain on its back which was, like another big continent, eight hundred thousand *Yojanas* in extent.

10. Supporting on his back the revolving mountain (which was set in motion and was) shaking by the velocity of the powerful arms of the chiefs of gods and demons, (the Lord, incarnated as) the First Tortoise of immeasurable power, regarded the circular motion of the mountain as pleasant scratching of his back, Oh dear King!

11. (Finding the need for still more vigorous efforts) with a view to invigorate their strength and energy, Lord Viṣṇu entered into the Asuras in his demonic form (i. e. his *rājasic* nature); He stimulated the power and energy of the hosts of gods by entering into them in his godly form (i. e. his *sāttvic* nature and into Vāsuki in the form of suspended consciousness (his *tāmasic* form).

12. The Lord of one thousand arms stood like another king of mountains, and stabilised the big mount Mandara by placing one hand over it. The gods headed by Brahmā, Lord Śiva and Indra in the heaven eulogised him and showered him with flowers.

13. Strengthened by the Supreme Lord as pressing the churning rod from above, supporting it from below in the form of a tortoise, entering into the bodies of gods and demons, the mountain (churning rod), and the serpent (the churning cord) the gods and demons lustily and joyously churned the ocean with the great mountain so violently, that all the crocodiles (and other aquatic animals) were greatly agitated.

14. The demons headed by Pauloma, Kāleya, Bali, Ilvala, and others whose splendour and energy was marred with the fire and smoke gushing forth from the thousand fearful eyes and nostrils of that big serpent, became like the *Sarala* trees consumed by forest conflagration.

15. Over the celestials whose splendour was dimmed by the flaming breaths of Vāsuki and whose clothes, excellent

garlands, coats and faces became smoky in colour, the clouds, under the control and (direct command) of the Lord copiously poured showers, and (cool) breezes, impregnated with the waves of the sea, began to blow.

16. When no nectar could come out from the sea, though it was vigorously churned that way (as described above), by the leaders of the hosts of gods and demons, the Unconquerable Lord began to churn it himself.

17. When the Lord, dark blue like clouds, wearing brightly shining garment of golden hue, adorned with a pair of ear-rings, flashing like lightning, with glossy wavy locks of hair on the head, wearing *vanamālā* (a garden of sylvan flowers), with eyes reddish like red lotus, churned the ocean, supporting the mount Mandara from below, and holding in his triumphant arms vouchsafing protection to the worlds, the serpent, he shone like another rival mountain.

18. From the ocean that was being churned and (as a consequence of which) teeming shoals of fishes, crocodiles, sea serpents, and tortoises and whales, sea elephant, alligators and whale-eater *timīṅgalas* got agitated, there issued forth the most deadly poison called *Halāhala*.

19. As that effervescent, irresistible unbearable poison of deadly force spread in each and every direction, above and below, creatures along with their leaders became terribly afraid, and for want of protection flew to Lord Sadāśiva for protection.

20. Beholding that foremost of gods seated along with his divine Consort on the mountain (Kailāsa) for the creation (or prosperity) of the three worlds, and practising penance, so agreeable to sages, for their final Liberation, and thus setting up an ideal before them, they (the celestial patriarchs) paid obeisance to him and offered their prayer.

The Lords of Created Beings said :

21. Oh God of gods ! Oh Supreme God ! Oh Creator, the very soul of beings ! Be pleased to save us who have sought shelter in you, from the poison that is burning the three worlds.

22. You alone are the Almighty Ruler capable of causing bondage and emancipation of the whole worlds, the wise

adore you as such, and as the father (or preceptor) who removes the afflictions of those who seek refuge in you.

23. Oh all pervading Lord ! When you, through your own Potency consisting of three *guṇas*, undertake to create, preserve and destroy the universe, Oh self-seeing perfect Lord, you assume (severally) the appellations *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Śiva*.

24. You are that Supreme mysterious Brahman, the creator of beings, of the higher (gods) and the lower order (sub-human beings). You are the supreme soul who appear as the universe by means of your various powers (such as *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*). Hence you are the Controller and Master of the Universe.

25. You are the source of the Word (*Vedas*) and (hence you stand self-revealed); you are the prime cause of the universe (viz. the principle *mahat*), the soul (the cosmic ego or *ahamkāra*); the three *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) which bring forth the Vital airs (*prāṇas*), cognitive and conative sense-organs (*indriyas*) and the material object (*dravya*) and the essential nature (*Sva-bhāva*) of everything, you are the Time spirit (causing commotion and imbalance of *guṇas*), the will to create (*kratu*), the Truth, the (cosmic) Order, the righteousness. The *sāstras* declare that *Pradhāna* constituting of the three *guṇas* is based on (and supported by) you, (or the *Praṇava* consisting of three syllables A U M reveals you) *

*This verse is variously interpreted :—

(i) VR : They say that You are the authority of *sāstras*, the cause of the world, the Supreme Self Who is of the nature of vital breath (*prāṇas*), senses, the five elements (*bhūtas*) whose body is Time, the Brahman, The Inner Controller of all, *dharma* (religiousness or to be adored with piety) and the three-syllabled (AUM) *praṇava* is regarded as representing You.

(ii) VJ : You are the root-cause of understanding; You are the promoter of life (senses etc), Your Will is the Truth itself; You are of the nature of existence (*sat*) consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*ānanda*); You are the *dharma* as You preserve the (social) order; You are designated by the letter OM (as stated by *upaniṣads*).

(iii) SD : *Kratu*—*Pravṛtti dharma*—leading to worldly life.

Satya & *ṛta*—*Nivṛtti dharma*—leading to renunciation of worldly life.

(iv) GD: *satya*—*factual statement*—Truth.

ṛta—sweet speech.

dharma—sacrifices and other rituals.

26. Oh Creator of the universe ! Fire which represents, gods in its person (as the distributor of sacrificial offerings to gods) is your mouth; the wise know that the earth is your lotus-like feet; Time is the motion, the cardinal points, the ears, and Varuṇa (the Lord of waters) the palate, of you who are the soul (the Inner controller) of all gods.

27. The sky represents your navel; the wind, your breath, the sun, your eyes, water, (your semen; the support of all *jīvas* (individual souls) elevated (like that of god *Brahmā*) and ordinary (like those of sub-human beings), is your ego; *Soma* or the Moon-god, your mind, and the heavens, your head.

28. The seas symbolize your abdomen, the mountains your bones; all plants and herbs your hair; the Vedic metres seven humours in your body; the *dharma* as enunciated in the Vedas your heart, Oh embodiment of the three Vedas.

29. Oh Lord ! the five *upaniṣads*¹ (the sacred hymns or *mantras* known as *Tatpuruṣa*, *Aghora*, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadeva*, and *Īśāna*) from which the collection of thirty eight *mantras* evolve, denote your (five) faces; that self-effulgence constituting the supreme principle which is designated as *Śiva* is your (real) absolute state.

1 : The text of the five *mantras* or *upaniṣads* are as follows :

(i) *Tat puruṣāya vidmahe, Mahādevāya dhīmahi |*

tanno Rudraḥ pracodayāt ||

(ii) *Aghorebhyo' tha ghorebhyo ghora-ghora-tarebhyaḥ |*

sarvatas sarva-sarvebhyo namas te astu Rudra-rūpebhyaḥ |

(iii) *sadyo-jātaṁ prapadyāṁ sadyo jātāya vai namaḥ |*

bhave bhavenāti-bhave bhajasva mām bhavod-bhavāya namaḥ |

(iv) *Vāmadevāya namo, jyeṣṭhāya namo, Rudrāya namaḥ, Kālāya namaḥ, kala-vikaraṇāya namo bala-vikaraṇāya namo, bala-pramathanāya namas sarva-bhūta-damanāya namo, manonmanāya namaḥ ||*

(v) *Īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām, Brahmā'dhipatir Brahmaṇo' dhipatir Brahmā Śivo me astu sadāśivam ||*

VD. has given the details how these five *mantras* or *upaniṣads* are broken up into thirty-eight *mantras*.

For example, from the 1st *upaniṣad* *Tatpuruṣāya* evolve the following *mantras* :—

(1) *Tat-puruṣāya vidmahe śāntyai |*

(2) *Mahādevāya dhīmahi Vidyāyai |*

(3) *tanno Rudraḥ Pratiṣṭhāyai |*

(4) *Pracodayāt dhṛtyai |*

30. Your shadow is seen in the waves of unrighteousness (such as hypocrisy, covetousness (by which destruction is caused; your (three) eyes are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (which bring about the creation of the universe); Oh Lord, the eternal Veda mainly composed in meters (like Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh) stand for your glance; for you are the omniscient¹ propounder of the *śāstric* lore.

31. Oh Lord of mountains! Your supreme effulgence where the modes of *Prakṛti* like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* have no place, and which is nothing but the supreme Brahman transcending all distinctions and differentiations, is absolutely inaccessible to all the guardian deities of various spheres and to Brahmā, Viṣṇu² and Indra.

32. That you destroyed Kāma (the god of Love), the sacrifice (of Dakṣa), Tripuras—the three cities (constructed by Maya) subdued the god of death, consumed the (Halāhala) poison (which is as good as consumed as you are certain to drink it up just now) and killed innumerable trouble-makers of living beings, is not so much praiseworthy, on your part, as your unawareness of the razing down of this universe—your own creation by the sparks emanating from the fire in your own (third) eye (you remaining absorbed in deep meditation)³

33. Shameless are they who talk nonsense that you are always accompanied by (your consort) Umā of whom you are (excessively) enamoured, though (actually) the pair of your feet are contemplated in their hearts by the world's preceptors who are absorbed in the spiritual bliss of the soul. (They are certainly brazen-faced) who (glibly) prate that you are a ferocious and murderous denizen of the funeral-place when you are a performer of austere penance (as an ideal to the

1. for *saṅkhyātmanah*—VJ reads *sākṣāt Manuḥ* 'Manu' himself Who enunciated the *śāstras* represents Your glance, from which originated the divine sage, by your free will.

2. Vaikuṇṭha :—VR explains that here the Supreme Soul is eulogised. As he abides in Rudra, He i.e. the Supreme Soul is rightly regarded as inaccessible to Vaikuṇṭha or upendra.

3. VJ.—states that the praise of Hara is really that of Hari, as mentioned in 'Hari. 'the soul of all is pleased hereby' *sarvātmā priyate Hariḥ*). —

sages) ! Never can such (people lost to shame) understand your sportive ways.

34. Even god Brahmā and others are incapable of accurately comprehending your essential nature, much less are they able to praise you who are all-pervading and transcendental to *Prakṛti* (The primordial nature) lying beyond the causal relation. How is it possible for us (the recentmost) creation of the creations (like Marīci and others) of Brahmā to extol you ? The prayer offered by us (to the best of our ability) is limited to our (meagre) capacity¹.

35. Oh Supreme Lord ! What we behold is only your (apparent) visible form, but not the transcendental one. (We however, consider ourselves blessed even with this). Though your activities are unmanifest, this manifestation of yours is meant for the weal (and protection) of the world.

Śrī Śuka said :

36. Observing the calamity of those (gods other beings) and being overwhelmed with compassion for them, the Deity, the friend of all beings, spoke thus unto his beloved consort Satī (i.e. Umā) (lest his beloved Umā should prohibit him from drinking the *Halāhala* poison).

Lord Śiva said :

37. "Oh ! What a pity ! Behold, Oh Bhavānī ! What calamity has befallen these creatures from the poison *Kālakūṭa*, produced from the churning of the sea of milk.

38. Certainly, it behoves me now to offer protection to these who are anxious to save their lives; for the protection of the afflicted is the sole concern (duty) of those who are powerful.

39-40. Saintly persons protect (the lives of) beings by sacrificing their own lives which they regard as transient. Oh auspicious lady ! Lord Hari, the soul of all (creatures), is pleased with the man who extends mercy to created beings who, being deluded by the illusive potency of the Supreme Self, become the enemies of each other. When the glorious

1. Our praise is an expression of our earnest devotion. VJ.

Lord Hari is pleased, I feel delighted along with the mobile and immobile creation. I, therefore, swallow up (the whole of) this poison. May blessings (and happy life) proceed from me to all the creatures."

Śrī Śuka said :

41. Having thus persuaded his consort, Pārvatī, the glorious Lord Śiva, who confers Bliss upon (or protects) the universe, proceeded to swallow up the poison; She, too, being aware of his prowess, expressed her approbation.

42. The liquid-poison (the concentrated impurities of the churned sea) showed its power even in his case inasmuch as, it reduced his throat blue, though it became an ornament of that benevolent Deity.

43. Generally righteous persons become afflicted at the torments and troubles of other people; for that (mitigation of those troubles) constitutes the highest type of worship of the Supreme Person, the Soul of the Universe.

44. Observing the wonderful feat (of swallowing up of the deadly poison) of Lord Śiva, the God of gods who fulfills the desires of his devotees, all creatures, Dakṣa's daughter (his consort Satī), god Brahmā and Viṣṇu eulogised him.

45. What (negligible) little poison leaked down from his palms while drinking, was conserved by scorpions, serpents, poisonous herbs and plants, cobras and other biting animals like dogs, jackals etc.).

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Lord's Manifestation as Mohinī (The Enchantress)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When the (Kālakūṭa) poison was drunk up by god Śiva (whose emblem is the bull), these celestials and demons felt (relieved and) delighted, and began to churn the sea with

(redoubled) force. Out of that churning emerged *Surabhi* (the wish-yielding cow).

2. The sages, the expounders of the *Vedas* (who devote themselves to sacrifices) accepted it (*Surabhi* which supplied materials like milk, ghee, useful for sacrifices) for (obtaining) sacred oblations in sacrificial performances which constitutes the path of gods (leading to the region of Brahman).

3. After this came out a horse named *Uccaiḥśravas* which was radiantly white like the moon. Bali expressed his desire for it (and took possession of it) but not Indra, as per instructions given by the Lord.

4. Next sprang forth the majestic (moon-white) elephant called *Airāvata* which, by its four tusks (huge like peaks of mountains) eclipsed the splendour and beauty of the white (snowy) mountain, *Kailāsa*, (the abode) of the glorious god *Śiva*.

5. Out of the (churned) ocean, came out a jewel called *Kaustubha*, a precious stone of ruby type. Hari expressed his desire to have that jewel as an adornment for his chest.

6. Thereafter, arose the (celestial tree) *Pārijāta* the ornament of the heavenly region,—a tree capable of conferring eternally all the objects desired by the supplicants just as your honour (*Parikṣit*) does on the earth.

7. Next to that came out the *Apsaras* (celestial nymphs) adorned with gold necklaces (and other ornaments), clad in excellent raiments, who delight the denizens of heaven with their charming gait, sportive movements and bewitching glances.

8. And thereafter was manifested goddess *Lakṣmī*, the very embodiment of Affluence (*Śrī*), the delight of Lord Hari (*Ramā*), who is (absolutely) devoted to the glorious Lord. She illumined with her splendour all the quarters (making people residing therein desirous to have affluence), even as the flash of lightening does against the crystalline reflector like mountain *Sudāmā*.

9. With their minds agitated by the excellence of her glorious beauty, graceful mobility, youthful age and brilliant complexion, all of them including gods, demons and human

beings, cherished a desire for her (in the form of affluence as they know her to be the mother of the three worlds).

10. The great Indra offered her a highly wonderful seat, while principal rivers, in their personal form, brought sacred waters in gold pitchers (for her ablutions).

11. The earth supplied all the herbs and plants required for her ablutions: cows, the five sacred articles (such as milk, curd, ghee constituting the *pañcagavya*) and the spring, all kinds of fruits and flowers produced in the vernal months of *Caitra* and *Vaiśākha*.

12. (With these articles) the seers laid down the procedure of Śāstric rites for her ablutions; while the Gandharvas began to sing auspicious song (in mellifluous notes), and celestial damsels well-versed in dancing, danced and sang.

13. The (presiding deities of) clouds poured forth the sounds of musical instruments like *mṛdaṅga*, *paṇava*, *muraja*, *ānaka* and *gomukha* (various kinds of drums, kettle drums etc.) and produced notes of conchs, flutes, string instruments like *vīṇā* in a loud fan-fare.

14. Thereafter, while Vedic hymns were being chanted by Brāhmaṇas, elephants supporting the four quarters, bathed with gold pots filled with sacred waters, the virtuous (sacred) goddess Śrī who was holding a lotus in her hand.

15. (When her bath was over) the ocean presented her two pieces of yellow silk raiments (one for the lower part of the body and one for the upper). Varuṇa offered her the garland *Vaijayantī*—by sucking honey from which the black-bees got intoxicated.

16. Viśvakarmā, the progenitor, presented her with various wonderful ornaments; Sarasvatī, a necklace of pearls; and Brahmā, a lotus and serpents, a pair of ear-rings.

17. Thereafter, when the auspicious *mantras* for averting evils were chanted and the benedictions were given (by Brāhmaṇas)¹, the goddess Śrī took in her hand a garland of (blue) lotuses with a swarm of black bees loudly humming about it. Her exceedingly beautiful countenance beaming with

1. *Kṛta-svastyayana*—The Comm. note the pun on *Svastyayana*: Śrī who has her permanent abode (*ayana*) on the auspicious bosom of Lord Viṣṇu (*Śrasti*).

a bashful smile and with the dangling of ear-rings pressed against her lovely cheeks, she set out (in search of her Lord).

18. With a pair of symmetrical, big breasts (closely touching each other) pasted with sandal and saffron, and a beautifully slender waist, she shone like a moving creeper of gold while she moved through the big assembly, making sweet jingling sound of her anklets.

19. She (The goddess Śrī) the embodiment of Affluence was looking out for a resort (viz. a husband) absolutely faultless, eternal and endowed with everlasting excellences, but she could not get one among the *gandharvas*, *yakṣas*, demons, *siddhas*, *cāraṇas*, celestials and others (in that assembly).

20. (The goddess Lakṣmī¹ in the form of Affluence says to herself.)

“Verily a person possessing asceticism has no control over his anger (e.g. the sage Durvāsas); (similarly) someone is endowed with wisdom but is not above attachment (e.g. Bṛhaspati or Śukra—the preceptors of gods and demons); some possess greatness but have no control over libidinousness (e.g. god Brahmā or Soma); how can a person (like Indra) who depends for his protection on others (or who is deprived of his position by others i.e. enemies) can be a ruler?

21. Righteousness is found in some but they lack compassion for other beings (e.g. Paraśurāma); some others have liberality but that is not conducive to Final Liberation (e.g. King Śibi); some are endowed with virility and prowess, which are subject to the ravages of Time; while the other who is (like Sage Sanaka completely free from attachment to *guṇas*, will have no place for (i.e. will have nothing to do with) the other person (even his wife, as he is always absorbed in meditation).

22. In some person there is a long life but they are not of amiable nature (liked by women, as, like Mārkaṇḍeya, they are always self-controlled); even that virtue is found in some but the duration of their life is unknown; in some (e.g. god Śiva) there is both (longevity and amiability) but even

¹ VD. explains that a great goddess like Lakṣmī possessed the knowledge of the past, present and the future. Hence she rejects persons though not present in the assembly.

he is inauspicious (as he stays in funeral grounds). And he who is exceedingly auspicious (as well as long living and lovable) but he (being self-satisfied) does not care for me".

23. Coming to this conclusion (after deliberation), she elected as her spouse, Lord Viṣṇu (Mukunda) who was most worthy due to his everlasting excellences, absolute independence and desirelessness, who is transcendental to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* and was sought by all spiritual powers and (hence) was coveted by her even though he is disinterested in all.¹

24. She placed on his shoulders (round his neck) the beautiful garland of blooming lotuses, resounding with the hum of intoxicated black bees. She stood by him silently waiting (for his grace). She indicated through her eyes blooming with a bashful smile that she attained to his bosom, her permanent resting place.

25. Lord Hari, the Father of the Three worlds offered his bosom as the permanent abode to Śrī (the celebrated consort and beloved of Hari), the mother of the three worlds who was the very embodiment of affluence and fortune or the source of all prosperity and riches. Being thus established (permanently and cosily), she promoted the welfare of all her creatures, the three worlds along with their rulers, by her compassionate and benign glances.

26. There was a loud chorus of the music and melodious notes issuing from the singing and dancing of the Gandharvas (lit. the followers of celestials) along with their wives (celestial damsels) and of the musical instruments such as conchs, trumpets, and drums (which were being played in its accompaniment).

27. Showering flowers on him, all progenitors of the worlds headed by Brahmā, Rudra, and Aṅgiras began to chant the glories of the All-pervading Lord in sacred hymns descriptive of his excellences and of appropriate import.

28. Being looked upon (with Grace) by Śrī, the gods,

1. ŚR. adds : Lakṣmī thought that though Viṣṇu is not interested in others due to His immersion in eternal spiritual bliss, He would not neglect her after marriage, as He entertains the Siddhis. She would consider herself blessed in His service. There is no propriety in marrying ordinary persons. —

progenitors of the worlds along with their creation, became endowed with virtuous nature and other excellences, and attained the supreme-most felicity.

29. When the Daityas and Dānavas were disregarded by the goddess Lakṣmī, they became dispirited, voluptuous, indolent and devoid of the sense of shame, Oh king.

30. Thereupon, arose the presiding deity of wine, Vāruṇī by name, in the form of a girl with lotus-eyes. The Asuras verily took hold of her, by the consent of Lord Hari.

31. As the sea was being churned by the sons of sage Kāśyapa (viz. gods and demons) with a desire to get the nectar there appeared a highly wonderful personage.

32. His (pair of) arms were long and muscular (stout); his neck was adorned with three lines as on a conch; his eyes were reddish; complexion bluish (like a cloud); youthful in age; wearing a wreath and adorned with all ornaments.

33. Clad in yellow garment, the broad-chested person was adorned with ear-rings of highly polished jewels; his hair were soft, glossy and curly, even to their ends; that charming person walked with a lion-like gait.

34. Adorned with bracelets and bearing (in his hands) a jar full of nectar, he was indeed a direct manifestation of a minute portion of a ray of the most glorious Lord Viṣṇu.

35-37 He was the well-known Dhanvantari, the Father (or revealer) of the Science of Medicine (lit. Science of life) who is a recipient of a special share in sacrificial offerings. Beholding him and the jar brimming with nectar (in his hands), all the demons, being covetous of appropriating all the products (of the churned ocean) to themselves, forcibly snatched away the jar (from him). As the jar containing nectar was thus being forcibly taken away by the Asuras, the gods, being dejected at heart sought refuge with lord Hari. Observing their pitiable condition described above, the glorious Lord who confers the desired objects to his servants (votaries), consoled them (thus): "Do not feel dejected. Both by sowing dissensions among the Asuras and by assuming the form of Mohinī (a charming damsel) through my deluding Yogic power, I shall accomplish your object"

38. With their hearts burning with the desire of grab-

bing the nectar, there arose a quarrel among them, each clamorously saying, "I must get it first", "my priority first", "Not you", "Not you".

39. "Gods too, who contributed their labour (efforts) to achieve this (production of nectar) deserve their due share in this (nectar) just as in a *Satra-yāga* all the performers of the sacrifice participate equally in the merit accruing from it). This is the eternal Law."

40. Oh king ! In this way the weaker demons who got jealous of the stronger ones who usurped the jar (of nectar) constantly protested to them.

41 In the meanwhile, the Supreme Ruler Viṣṇu who knows all expedients, assumed an extremely wonderful form of a young damsel (charming) beyond the power of words.

42. The form (of the damsel) was attractive to the eyes. It was blue like a lotus, in complexion, beautiful in every limb. Its ears were symmetrical and adorned with earrings. Its countenance had beautiful cheeks and a shapely nose.

43. Its waist was slender due to the heavy breasts developed by blooming youth. Its eyes looked frightened (as if) by the humming of the black-bees attracted by the fragrance of its mouth.

44. It wore on its profuse mass (locks) of hair a wreath of blooming *Mallikā* (a kind of jasmine) flowers. Its shapely neck was beautified by a necklace and her beautiful arms were decked with armlets.

45. It appeared enchanting due to her girdle enhancing the beauty of islet-like big hips covered with shining (spotless) cloth. A pair of anklets making a jingling sound while walking decorated its feet.

46. By its bashful smiles, dancing eye-brows and amorous glances, it constantly provoked passion in the hearts of the Daitya generals.¹

1. VJ's text continues this chapter to the end of the next one. Thus ŚR's 9th chapter corresponds to VJ's 8th chapter.

CHAPTER NINE*Distribution of Nectar by Mohini*

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. The Asuras who renounced the spirit of mutual friendship, reproached each other (for the nectar) . Adopting the ways of robbers (with a determination to secure the nectar) they were snatching the jar of nectar from each other when they happened to behold the approaching damsel (the Mohinī-form of Viṣṇu) .

2. “Oh what a graceful form! What exquisite splendour ! What a charming youthfulness !” With such passion enkindled in their hearts, they ran up to her and began to enquire.

3. “Who are you Oh damsel, with eyes like lotus-petals? Whence have you come ? What do you intend to do (What is the object of your visit)? Tell us whose daughter you are. You are as it were churning (agitating) our minds, Oh lady with shapely thighs !

4. Not that we do not know (i. e. we do know definitely) that you are not touched by the celestials, Daityas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Cāraṇas or (even by) guardians of the worlds. How then (could it be) by human beings ?

5. Oh lady with beautiful brows ! Indeed ! you must have been certainly deputed by the merciful Lord of the universe to give delight to the senses and minds of all embodied beings. Is it not so ? or have you come of your own accord ?

6. Oh proud lady with a beautiful waist ! (Deputed by the Lord as you are) ! As such it behoves you to bring about amity and happiness among us who, though kins, have turned out to be enemies by jealously contending to obtain one common object.

7. As the sons of the sage Kaśyapa, we are all brothers and have displayed our prowess. Be pleased to distribute the prize (the nectar) equitably, so that there will be no ground for a quarrel.

8. When approached with this request by the Daityas, Lord Hari who assumed the form of that damsel by his delu-

ding Potency (*Māyā*), just laughed, and addressed them as follows, looking at them (all the while) with captivating side-long glances.

The Lord said :

9. How is it that you, the sons of the (great) sage Kaśyapa,¹ associate yourselves with a wanton woman like me? Certainly, no wise man reposes trust in women.

10. Oh enemies of celestials ! The wise people say that the friendship of wolves and especially of way-ward women who are always on the look-out for ever-new victims (and men), is momentary (and unreliable).

Śrī Śuka said :

11. By such of her jocular and enticing remarks, the Asuras (were tempted to feel) reassured in their minds. They gave out an incomprehensible yet significant laugh, and handed over the jar of nectar to her.

12. Thereupon, taking the charge of the jar of nectar, Hari spoke in a tone brightened up with a gentle smile: "If you (unanimously and whole-heartedly) are ready to accept whatever I do, whether right or wrong, in any way (I please), (then and then only) I shall (undertake to) distribute the nectar among you".

13. On hearing her speech, the leaders of the Asuras, incapable of comprehending the depth and significance of her words, agreed to her condition saying "Be it so".

14. Thereupon having observed a fast² (as per Mohinī's instruction) they took their bath. After offering oblations to the fire, and having distributed (food etc.) to cows,

1. VD. dissolves: *Kaśyapa-dāyāda*—into *Kaśya-pa-dāya-ada*—who are in the habit of and deserving to be served with wine. "Why do you want nectar?" VC. "You, sons of a great sage like Kaśyapa ! The father a great sage and the sons hunt after wanton women !" This is the sarcastic joke.

2. *Upoṣya*—VC. states that they had already observed a fast for the auspicious act of drinking nectar. But a quarrel broke out among themselves for settling which Mohinī became the mediator. After entrusting the jar of nectar to her, they took their bath.

Brāhmaṇas and other beings, they got performed the rite of *Svastyayana* (recitation of benedictory verses and offer of blessings) by Brāhmaṇas.

15. Wearing brand new clothes according to their (individual) choice, and gorgeously adorning their person with ornaments, all of them entered upon (and squatted) on (the seats of) *Kuśa* grass the ends which pointed to the east.

16-17. When the gods and demons (sons of *Diti*) were sitting with their faces to the east in that hall fragrant with incense, decorated with wreaths of flowers and illuminated with lamps, there entered, with the jar of nectar in hands, she (*Mohinī*) with beautiful, round, symmetrical thighs, of gait slow due (to the weight of) her bulky hips covered with brilliant silk raiment, eyes swimming as if through inebriation, of pitcher-like big breasts, warbling (as it were) with the jingling of her gold anklets, Oh King.

18. Ogling Her, the veritable supreme Deity, as a compeer to goddess *Śrī*¹ (or *Lakṣmī* in beauty), with a winning countenance, having beautiful ears adorned with gold ear-rings, shapely nose and charming cheeks, the gods and demons were completely enchanted by her glances accompanied with captivating smiles while her brassiere (the cloth cover of her breasts) slipped (exposing her breasts).

19. Considering that it is unfair to offer nectar to demons who like serpents are wicked by nature, Lord Viṣṇu did not distribute it to Asuras.

20. Arranging them both in separate rows, the Lord of the world made them sit in their respective rows.

21. Taking the Jar of nectar and beguiling the demons by charming movements of brows, bashful smiles, play with garment and ornaments, sweet flattering words, he made gods who were sitting at a distance, to drink the nectar which prevents old age and death.

22. Oh King ! The Asuras abided by the pledge given

1. *Śrī-Sakhī*—GS. observes that though Viṣṇu was a male companion of *Śrī*, he acted like a female friend to serve the interests of his devotees.

by them. Out of covetous lust for her and feeling it below their dignity to quarrel with a lady, they kept quiet.

23. They cherished unbounded attachment and lustful longing for her and were too nervous to affect it adversely. Being restrained by the high reverence shown to them by her ("Let the niggardly gods drink first. Sensible people like you should wait a bit") they uttered nothing unpleasant.

24. Disguising himself in the garb of celestials, Rāhu entered (stealthily) in the row of gods (between the sun and the moon) and drank the nectar but was indicated (exposed with gestures) by the sun and the moon (who feared him as more powerful than they).

25. Just while he (Rāhu) was drinking, Hari (swiftly) severed his head with his discus of razor-like sharpness so his headless trunk to which nectar did not touch, fell down dead.

26. His head (however) attained immortality upon which the Birthless Lord conferred planet-hood. But cherishing (this old) enmity, he assails the sun and the moon on the new-moon-day and the full-moon-day (respectively whenever he gets an opportunity).

27. When gods had almost consumed the nectar, the glorious Lord Hari, the creator and protector of the world (renouncing his female form) reassumed his own form, while the Asura chiefs kept looking on (agape).

28. In this way, even though (the factors such as) time, place, instrument (apparatus), activity and the objective of the hosts of gods and demons were the same, there was divergence in the fruit (reaped). Out of them, gods easily obtained the fruit viz. the nectar, due to their resort to the dust of the lotus-feet of the Lord, while the Daityas did not.

29. Whatever is done by men with their life, wealth, senses, mind and words for their own person, progeny etc., becomes futile as a consequence of entertaining the idea of difference and distinction. But whatever is done by employing the same set of means dedicating them to the Lord without cherishing the sense of difference, is crowned with success like watering the roots of a tree (reaches to all its branches, leaves etc.). —

CHAPTER TEN*A Battle between Gods and Asuras*

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. In this way, Oh King, though Dānavas and the Daityas were careful and put in their best of efforts (in churning the ocean), they did not obtain the nectar because they had turned away their face from Lord Vāsudeva.

2. Having accomplished the production of ambrosia and having made his votaries, the gods, to drink of it, the Lord rode on the back of Garuḍa and flew away while all beings were simply looking on (agape).

3. Seeing the best luck (in succeeding to drink the nectar) of their enemies and being unable to tolerate it (out of jealousy), the sons of Diti (*Daityas*) attacked gods with their weapons uplifted.

4. With their power increased by drinking of nectar and depending on the feet of Lord Nārāyaṇa as their asylum, all the gods retaliated unanimously with their weapons.

5. There, on the shore (of the Milky Sea) was fought the fiercest and the most bloody battle called (after the belligerents as) the *Devāsura* battle (the report or sight of) which made the hair stand on end, Oh King!

6. There (on the sea-shore) the enemies with their minds full of wrath clashed (against each other) on the battle field and struck one another with swords, arrows and various other weapons.

7. Terrific was the noise caused by the blasting of conchs and trumpets, beating of tabors, drums and *Damarus* and of the trumpeting elephants, neighing horses, rattling chariots and shouting soldiers.

8. In that battle, warriors in chariots clashed with car-warriors, foot-soldiers with foot-soldiers, horses with horses and elephants with elephants.

9. Some soldiers fought riding camels, some on elephants while others on donkeys, some on white-faced bears, while others on tigers and monkeys.

10. Some fought (while sitting) on the back of Kites,

vultures, cranes, on hawks and *bhāṣas* (a kind of bird), whales (*Timiṅgalas*) and *Śarabhas* (eightfooted animal capable of killing a lion), bison, rhinoceros, bulls, buffalos and *Aruṇas*.

11. Some fought (riding) on the backs of jackals, rats, chameleons, hares and men; some others on goats and sheep, deer and swans, while others on hogs.

12. Some fought riding birds of land and of water and others on animals of deformed shape. Warriors on both the sides penetrated more deeply and further still.

13-15. Like two oceans swarming with sea-monsters shone the two (warring) armies of Deva and Dānava warriors with their ranks of fighters distinguished by their flags of different colours, by their spotlessly white umbrellas with highly precious handles studded with diamonds, diamond handled fans made of feathers of peacock tails and *chowries*; with their upper garments and turbans waved up by winds and with their burnished armours and ornaments glittering brightly and their sharp weapons sparkling in the rays of the sun.

16-17. In this battle the commander-in-chief of the Asura force was Bali, the son of Virocana whose aerial car was called *Vaihāyasa*. It was manufactured by Maya and was capable of flying to any place at the occupant's will. It was equipped with all war-materials and weapons. Oh King, it was full of wonder that it surpassed all imagination and description (or could not be accurately located due to its unpredictable and quick movements); sometimes it was visible and sometimes invisible.

18. Surrounded by the commanders of Asura forces, Bali occupied that foremost aerial car. With *chowries* being waved on either side and with a white umbrella, he shone like a rising moon.

19-22 On all sides around him, in their respective aerial cars, attended various squadron-leaders of Asuras such as Namuci, Śambara, Bāṇa, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Dvi-mūrdha (A two-headed demon), Kālanābha, Praheti, Heti, Ilvala, Śakuni, Bhūta-santāpa (the tormentor of all beings), Vajradanṣṭra, Virocana, Hayagrīva, Śaṅku-Śiras, Kapila, Megha-ḍundubhi, Tāraka, Cakra-dṛk, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Jambha, Utkala, Ariṣṭa, Ariṣṭanemi, Maya, the Lord of the three flying

cities and other demon (tribes) such as Pauloma, Kāleya, Nivāta-Kavaca and others.

23. Without receiving any share in the *soma* or nectar, they had only to undergo hardships and exertions (for churning out the nectar). All of them had mostly vanquished the gods, just at the beginning of the battle.

24. Roaring loudly like lions, they blasted their loud-sounding conchs. Perceiving his foes so proud (and confident of their strength), Indra, the killer of the demon Bala, became extremely enraged.

25. The king of heaven (Indra) who rode Airāvata, the elephant supporting the eastern direction, shone like the sun (the Lord of the day) rising on the eastern mountains with cascades (of water) gushing down.

26. Around Indra stood gods in their respective vehicles, with flags and wielding various weapons. There were the guardians of the world like Vāyu (the Wind-god), Agni (the fire-god), Varuṇa (the Lord of waters) and others along with their followers.

27. Assaulting each other violently and reviling one another in biting terms, cutting to the quick, they rushed forward challenging each other and engaged in duels.

28. Bali fought with Indra, Guha conflicted with Kārttikeya; Varuṇa contended with Heti, and the Sun-god with Praheti, Oh King.

29. Yama on his part combated with Kāla-nābha, Viśvakarmā verily gave battle with Maya; Śambara battled with Tvaṣṭṛ and Virocana with Savitr.

30. Namuci took up arms against Aparājita, the pair of Aśvinī-Kumāras against Vṛṣaparvā, the Sun-god alone against the hundred sons of Bali of whom Bāṇa was the eldest.

31. *Soma* (the Moon-god) gave battle with Rāhu; Anil (the wind-god) with Puloman; the mighty goddess Bhadrakālī with Niśumbha and Śumbha.

32. Vṛṣākapi combated with Jambha, Vibhāvasu with the demon Mahiṣa, Ilvala along with Vātāpi with the sons of god Brahmā (such as Marīci and others), Oh Vanquisher of enemies.

33. Durmarṣa fought with Kāmadeva (the god of Love),

Utkala with (seven) Mother-goddesses; Bṛhaspati fought with Śukra, and Śanaīścara (the presiding deity of the planet Saturn) with Naraka.

34. Maruts contended with Nivāta-Kavaca demons, the Vasu-gods with the Kāleya-tribe of Daityas, (gods called) Viśve-devas with the sons of Puloman and the (eleven) Rudra-gods with Krodhavaśa serpents.

35. In this way, in the battle wherein Asuras (demons) as well as leaders of gods were fighting in duels and collectively in as body, approached one another and with the desire of gaining victory, violently struck one another with sharp arrows, swords and iron clubs and javelins.

36. They chopped off the heads of each other with (weapons called) *bhuṣuṇḍi* (a fire-arm), discuses, maces, lances, battle axes, *Śaktis*, *Ulmukas* (fire-brands) *prāsas* (a barbed missile) *Bhallakas*, (long swords), *parighas* (iron bars), *mudgaras* (hammer-shaped weapons), and *bhindipālas* (small javelins).

37. Elephants and horses (along with their riders), warriors riding chariots and foot-soldiers, riders of various animals and conveyances were cut down to pieces, their arms, thighs, necks and legs were hacked and hewn; their flags, bows, coats of armour and ornaments were torn and tattered.

38. Heavy dust that was raised by trampling and pounding under feet the battle-ground, and the dashing of the wheels of the chariot against it, enveloped the quarters, the sky, and the sun, but settled down to the ground by profuse flood of spouts of blood (of the wounded warriors—the spouts of blood reaching up to heaven drenching the clouds of dust).

39. That battle-field appeared bright as it was thickly strewn with heads from which the diadems and ear-rings were forcibly shaken off (and fallen), with eyes blood-shot with wrath, and tightly closed lips bitten with anger, long and stout arms decorated with ornaments and still clasping the weapons and thighs shapely like elephant's trunk.

40. The headless trunks of the warriors sprang to their feet and (as if) perceiving through the eyes of their fallen heads, rushed on the battle-field onwards the opposing warriors with their arms uplifted in their powerful arms.

41. Bali discharged at Indra ten arrows, three at the elephant Airāvata, four (one arrow each) at the four guards of Airāvata, and one at the conductor of the elephant.

42. Just with a smile, the prompt and valorous Indra cut them in the transit with equal number of sharp Bhalla arrows, even before they could reach him.

43. Observing his excellent skill (in archery) Bali, being intolerant, took in his hand a *Śakti* (a dart-like missile) dazzling like a big meteor. But Indra cut it while it was in the hands of Bali.

44. Then in a serial order Bali took up a *Śūla* (a spear), a *prāsa* (a barbed missile), a *tomara* (an iron club) and *ṛṣṭi* (a double-edged sword). But whatever weapon Bali took, the mighty Indra cut it all.

45. The Asura (Bali) then disappeared and created his demonic illusion. Oh King ! there appeared a mountain over the head of the celestial army.

46. From the mountain fell down the trees burning with forest-conflagration, and rocks with chisel-pointed ends descended therefrom crushing the hostile forces to powder.

47. From that mountain rushed forth large serpents, cobras, scorpions, lions and tigers and boars crushing down big elephants.

48. Loudly shouting 'cut down', 'Break asunder' hundreds of naked female Rākṣasīs (ogresses), armed with pikes, appeared along with multitudes of Rākṣasas. Oh King.

49. Large roaring clouds with deep, terrific thunder and blown by stormy wind, rained live coals of fire.

50. A wide spread formidable fire driven by powerful gales and most terrible like the *fire* at the end of the universe, was created (with his black magic) by the demon (Bali) and it began to burn the army of gods.

51. Then there appeared all around them an ocean transgressing all its limits and looked terrible on account of the waves and whirlpools tossed by strong gales.

52. While such terrific illusions were being conjured up by Daityas, powerful in black magic, and dangerous because of their invisible movements, the celestial soldiers stood appalled and despondent.

53. Oh King ! Indra and other gods did not know how to counteract this illusion when the glorious Lord, the creator of the universe was contemplated and he manifested himself.

54. With his feet tender as young leaves, placed across the shoulders of *Garuḍa* (of beautiful wings), he appeared clad in yellow silken garments, with his eyes like a pair of budding lotuses. He wielded eight weapons in his hands. He wore the resplendent Śrī (*Śrī-vatsa* mark) on his bosom, and the *Kaustubha* gems round his neck, an invaluable crown and a pair of priceless ear-rings as well.

55. Hardly did he enter the battle-fields the illusion conjured up by the (black magic) tricks of the Asuras disappeared by the greatness of the destroyer of all types of *māyās* just as a dream breaks up on the return of wakefulness, the very recollection (remembrance) of Hari, put an end to difficulties.

56. Perceiving that Hari arrived on the battle-field on his *Garuḍa*, Kālanemi who was riding a lion, whirled his javelin aloft and hurled it at him. Playfully seizing it as it was about to fall on the head of *Garuḍa*, he killed the enemy (Kālanemi) along with his animal with that very weapon.

57. Assaulting the Lord by whose discus the over-powerful Mālī and Sumālī fell down with their head severed on the battle-field. Mālyavān (another Asura General) was about to strike *Garuḍa* on the head with his heavy mace when Hari, the Supreme-most person, lopped off the head of the enemy who was roaring loudly.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

End of the Battle Between Gods and Asuras at Nārada's Mediation

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Then, having recovered their minds (and *morale* from the impact of demonic illusions) through the great divine grace of the Supreme Person, Indra, Vāyu and other gods

severely hit back each one of the demons who massively assailed them before, in that very battle.

2. When the glorious Indra, being enraged at Bali, the son of Virocana, raised up his Vajra (thunderbolt), all creatures cried out, “Alas ! Ha Ha” (lest it should kill Bali).

3. Despising contemptuously the noble-minded, well-equipped Bali who was moving (fearlessly) in the great battle facing Indra, Indra—the wielder of Vajra, spoke to him as follows :

4. “Just as a roguish conjuror makes gullible persons as if blind-folded by his conjuring tricks (and incantations) and robs them of their money, you desire to conquer us, the masters of such Māyās (black magic and illusory tricks) with your Māyā, Oh fool.

5. Those who by their illusive powers (or by unfaithful cunning observances of vows) wish to ascend to the celestial world or desire to transcend it to go to still higher regions (viz. Liberation), I shall oust such ignorant rogues from the post occupied by them previously and definitely throw them downward still (with no hopes of rising up) .

6. Oh dull-witted fellow ! I, that very Indra, shall, with my *Vajra* (thunderbolt) of hundred joints, remove the head of yours, so adept in black magic and evil spells. Show your valorous prowess with the help of your clansmen”.

Bali responded

7. “To those whose previous acts became fruitful through the impelling of Time (Destiny) who participate in the battle, fame, victory, defeat and death come all in due course.

8. Therefore wise, thoughtful people realize that all the above (victory, defeat etc.) are controlled by Time and they neither get elated with joy or downcast with grief. You all are, however, ignorant about this (truth).

9. Inasmuch as you regard yourself as the agent of this (victory, defeat etc.), you deserve to be pitied by good people (for your foolishness) and as such, we do not accept your words (howsoever cutting to the quick (they be))”.

Śrī Śuka said:

10. Having thus retorted to the Lord of gods, the valorous Bali, the vanquisher of warriors, struck again with Nārāca arrows drawn to the ear, Indra who was in retaliation previously hit back with reproachful words.

11. The god Indra who was thus reproached by the enemy who expressed (nothing but) the truth, did not however tolerate the retort like an elephant pricked with a goad.

12. Indra, the conqueror of enemies, discharged at him, his unfailing weapon *Vajra* (thunderbolt). And down fell Bali on the ground, along with his (aerial) car like a mountain with its wings severed.¹

13. Seeing his friend fallen down, Jambha, the friend and well-wisher of Bali, attacked Indra with a view to carry out his duty as a friend, even though his friend was fallen.

14. Riding his lion, the extremely powerful Jambha approached Indra and raising his mace (*gadā*) impetuously struck him on the neck and the elephant as well.

15. Stunned and tormented by the stroke of the mace, the elephant was deeply distressed and touching the ground with its knees, it fell into a swoon.

16. Thereupon, a chariot yoked with a thousand horses was brought by Mātali. The Lord of gods left the elephant and got into the chariot.

17. Expressing his appreciation at the (prompt) services rendered by the Charioteer (Mātali) smiling, Jambha, the most prominent Dānava, struck him with a burning javelin.

18. Screwing up all his fortitude, Mātali bore up the extremely unbearable pain of the dart. Greatly enraged at it, Indra sundered off the head of Jambha with his *Vajra* (thunderbolt).

19. Having heard from Sage Nārada, the report of Jambha being killed (in the battle), his kinsmen Namuci, Bala, Pāka rushed to the battle field in great haste.

1. In the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa Sundara* 1. 124-33 we are told that in the *Kṛta* age mountains had wings which Indra clipped. Only Maināka was saved by Vāyu in repayment of which obligation he allowed Hanumān to rest during his jump to Laṅkā and told him of the clipping.

20. Cutting Indra to the quick by biting, harsh words, they covered him with volleys of arrows as clouds would do to a mountain, with a down-pour of rain.

21. In that battle, the light-handed Bala struck simultaneously all the thousand horses of Indra with as many arrows.

22. It was certainly an achievement of a marvellous feat in the battle, when Pāka simultaneously fitted and discharged two hundred arrows and struck Mātali with a hundred and all the parts of the chariot with a hundred shafts.

23. With fifteen big arrows furnished with golden hilts, Namuci shot Indra and roared in the battle like a thundering rain-charged cloud.

24. Like clouds obscuring the sun in the rainy season, the Asuras screened off on all sides Indra, along with his chariot and charioteer, with net-works of arrows.

25. Not being able to behold Indra and (considering themselves as) being leaderless and vanquished by the inimical forces, the hosts of celestials and their followers became bewildered and shrieked out like merchants in a ship wrecked on the high seas.

26. Thereupon issued out Indra along with his chariot, horses, flag and charioteer from the cage of arrows. Indra appeared brilliant like the sun illuminating the cardinal points, the sky and the earth, with his effulgence, at the close of the night.

27. Observing his army overpowered by enemies in the battle, the god, the wielder of *Vajra* (thunderbolt) vehemently lifted up his thunderbolt (determined) to strike down the enemy.

28. With that very eight-edged weapon he (simultaneously) sundered the heads of Bala and Pāka, striking terror into the hearts of the kinsmen who stood (simply) looking on, Oh King (Parikṣit).

29. On perceiving their death and being overwhelmed with grief, revenge and rage, Namuci, determined to kill Indra, put forth a mighty exertion.

30. Catching hold of a javelin made of iron, furnished with gold, he attacked Indra in rage, threatening loudly,

“Now you are killed”. He hurled it at the King of gods and roared like a lion.

31. Even as it was dashing with terrific speed through the sky, Indra shattered it into thousand pieces with his arrows. The lord of the celestials, out of rage, struck him with his *Vajra* (thunderbolt) on the neck with a view to chop off his head.

32. The thunderbolt that was discharged with great vehemence did not pierce his skin. It was certainly the most wonderful that the *Vajra* (the thunderbolt) that killed the extremely powerful *Vṛtra*, was baffled by the skin of Namuci's neck.

33. Indra apprehended fear from the enemy from whom even *Vajra* (thunderbolt) was baffled. What has happened through the Destiny, has deluded the whole of the world.

34. It is by this thunderbolt that, in days of yore, I carried out the severance of wings of mountains which taking to their wings at will, settled anywhere on the earth, causing destruction to people, by their weight.

35. It was by this *Vajra* that *Vṛtra*, the very embodiment of the power of the austere penance of *Tvaṣṭṛ*, was split asunder, and also other mighty (persons) whose skin could not be scratched by all other missiles.

36. Such *Vajra*, when hurled by me at an insignificant Asura, became baffled and ineffective. Useless has become the spiritual energy of the *Brāhmaṇa* (with which it was invested): It has become (nothing but) a stick which I won't handle any more”.

37. To Indra who was thus pondering in dejection, a voice from heaven said, “This demon should not be killed by weapons wet or dry.

38. He has been conferred a boon by me that he would not meet death from wet or dry things. Hence, you have to think out some other expedient (for killing) the enemy”.

39. Hearing the heavenly voice, Indra composed his mind and contemplated. It occurred to him (lit. he saw) that foam (of the sea) was the (real) expedient which comprises both the conditions (of being wet *and* dry).

40. With the foam which was neither dry nor wet (but

was both simultaneously) he chopped off the head of Namuci.¹ Hosts of sages sang his eulogies and showered the Lord of gods with flowers.

41. The chief of Gandhāvas, Viśvāvasu and Parāvasu gave musical concert. Gods beat big drums and celestial nymphs danced with joy.

42. Other gods like Vāyu, Agni, Varuṇa and others destroyed their opponents with volleys of missiles, just as lions would kill the deer.

43. The divine sage Nārada who was deputed to celestials by god Brahmā, on perceiving the slaughter of Dānavas, prevented them (from that genocide, with the following words):

Nārada said:

44. "Supported as you were by the arms of Lord Nārāyaṇa, nectar was secured by you. You are also favoured by goddess Śrī (the consort of Nārāyaṇa). Hence you now cease from fighting."

Śrī Śuka said:

45. Paying due respect to the words of the sage Nārada, they controlled the impetuosity of their rage. All of them returned to heaven, all the while being praised by their attendants.

46. The survivors of the battle carried the still unconscious Bali to the western mountain (of the setting sun) as per Nārada's advice.

47. Śukrācārya (the preceptor of Daityas) restored to life (all the Daityas) whose limbs were intact, and necks in existence (unbroken), by means of his secret science of restoring life (*saṁjīvani vidyā*).

48. Bali regained his consciousness and other faculties at the touch of Śukra's hand. Being endowed with the reality about the nature of the world, Bali suffered no depression, even though he was defeated.

1. *apāṁ phenena Namuceṣṭ Sira Indrodavartayaḥ* RV 8.14.13, AV. 19.3.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Lord Śiva Fascinated by Mohini

The son of Bādarāyaṇa (Śrī Śuka) said :

1-2. When god Śiva (the bull-bannered god) heard that Lord Hari infatuated the Dānavas in a female form and made the hosts of gods to drink the nectar, he ascended his bull along with goddess Pārvatī, and surrounded by all the hosts of goblins, paid a visit to the region where god Viṣṇu (the killer of Madhu) was residing, with a view to see him.

3. God Śiva (the source of the world) who along with his consort Umā (Pārvatī) was reverentially received by the Lord (Viṣṇu) and was seated comfortably, returned his respects with compliments and spoke smilingly.

Śrī Mahādeva said :

4. “Oh God of gods! Pervader of the universe ! The Lord of the Universe of which you are the embodiment !¹ You are the soul, the source² and the controller of all things.

5.* Your honourable self is that *Brahman* which is the Reality and pure consciousness—the *Brahman* wherefrom proceed the beginning (the emergence), the end (the destruction), the middle (the sustenance) of this universe, but who, due to his being unchangeable is not affected by these (changes) ; who constitutes this, the external thing (or the object to be enjoyed) as well as ‘I’, the other (the enjoyer of that object) .

6. Meditative sages desirous of (attaining) the final beatitude do not seek any other blessings. They renounce attachment to both (this and the other world) and adore your lotus-feet.

7.** You are that perfect Brahman, immortal, attribute-

1. *Jagan mayu*—Whose body is constituted of the sentients and non-sentients in the universe—VR.

2. *hetu*—The efficient cause and not extraneous ones like *adr̥ṣṭa*—VJ.

* Deleted by VJ.

** Acc. to VR. Brahman being the material cause is not different from everything else.

less and hence untouched by misery; absolutely and essentially blissful but not subject to modifications. Though one without a second, you are distinct from everything else. You are the cause of the origin, maintenance and dissolution of the universe, and the controller of all *jīvas*. Though sought after by them, you expect nothing from them.

8. You alone are one, both gross and subtle, the cause and the effect. Just as there is no difference in the sub-effect called gold whether moulded (into an ornament) or (kept) unmodified (in its original form)¹ it is through ignorance that difference is superimposed on you, by people. The attribution of difference is due to *guṇas* or modifications, and you are absolutely free from them.

9.* Some (viz. the followers of the Vedānta) regard you to be the *Brahman*; while others (i.e. Mīmāṃsakas) consider you to be *Dharma*. Some (i.e. Sāṃkhyas) think you to be the Supreme Controller transcendental to both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. Others (the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* school) regard you as one endowed with nine powers,² while some others (followers of Yoga) know you to be the Supreme Person (*Mahā-puruṣa*), (while) you are changeless and self-dependent absolute.

10. Neither I nor god Brahmā (whose duration of life is of two *parārdha* years), nor sages of whom Marīci is the chief, though created from the *Sattva* quality, can comprehend the (real nature of the) universe created by you (much less your real nature). Oh Lord, how can demons and human beings and others whose minds are deluded by *Māyā* and who

1. VR. regards this view as that of Vaiśeṣikas who, through ignorance, believe that this universe exists independent of Brahman.

VJ. takes *vihata* as a v.l. for *vihiṭa* and states 'inasmuch as difference is overlaid on you through ignorance, it is *ipso facto* destroyed i.e. null and void'.

* VJ thinks that the theories about God mentioned here are held by the followers of Vedānta and of Smṛtis, Purāṇas, Pāñcarātra and by Ekāntins who regard God as *Mahāpuruṣa* who is changeless and absolute.

2. ŚR. enumerates the powers of the Lord as follows :

Vimalā, ut-karṣiṇī, Jñāna, Kriyā, Yoga, Prahvī, Satyā, Iśānā, Anugrahā

are of inauspicious *rājasic* and *tāmasic* origins,¹ or whose behaviour is wicked due to the influence of *rajas* and *tamas*, can understand (You or Your creation comprehensively).

11. You are essentially knowledge itself. As such you know everything—(such as) all of your own work, the creation, continuance and destruction of the universe, the activities of beings, their bondage and emancipation from the mundane existence. Just as, Vāyu (the air) enters everything mobile and immobile as well as the sky, you, being the soul of everything and the very knowledge itself, pervade everything.

12. Your incarnations, while indulging in sportive activities with *guṇas*, have been witnessed by me. As such, I desire to behold that form of a young damsel assumed by you.

13. As we have a great curiosity, we have eagerly come to see that (female) form whereby Daityas were fascinated and gods were enabled to drink nectar.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. Being thus entreated by god Śiva, the wielder of the trident, Lord Viṣṇu gave out a hearty laugh, and replied in words pregnant with deep meaning.

The Lord replied :

15. When the jar of nectar passed (into the possession of the Daityas), the female form was assumed by me for exciting the curiosity of Daityas (and thus beguiling them) with a view to accomplish the interests of gods.

16. Oh ! The best of gods ! As you are curious to see it, I shall presently reveal to you that form which excites amorous passions and which is highly appreciated by passionate persons.

Śrī Śuka said :

17. While speaking thus, the venerable Lord immediately vanished at that very spot, while god Śiva, the Source of the Universe, along with his spouse Umā, waited there wistfully casting his glances in all directions.

18. Thereupon in a garden among trees blossoming with variegated flowers and reddish foliage, he saw a lovely

1. *Abhadraṁ rājasam ca tāmasam ca vṛttam utpattir yepām te. ŚR.*

damsel with a girdle round her waist clothed with a brilliant silken raiment, engaged in playing with a ball.

19. At every step she appeared as if getting broken in her waist, by the heavy weight of her big breasts, shaken by her movements of bending and rising along with the movements of the bounding ball, as well as with the weight of her precious solid pearl necklaces, and was taking her foliage-like tender feet here and there (from place to place).

20. Due to the quick (impredictable) movements of the ball in different directions, the pupils of her longish unsteady eyes appeared agitated. Her countenance appeared all the more beautiful with her cheeks shining with the resplendent pair of ear-rings and with her dark glossy tresses.

21. With her beautiful left hand she was tightening her loosened silken raiment and her dishevelling braids of hair and was hitting the ball with the other hand, she appeared as if enchanting the world with her own deluding powers.

22. Beholding her playing with the ball, the god lost his balance of mind by her side glances, accompanied with a covert smile caused by some slight bashfulness, while sporting with the ball. His mind became agitated by the exchange of mutual gazing of the woman. He became oblivious of himself, of his consort Umā and of his own attendants.

23. When the ball slipped from her hand and went to a long distance and she ran after it while the wind blew away her fine silken garment along with the girdle. And indeed (even) god Śiva stood gazing.

24. Beholding that exquisitely charming damsel with such winsome side glances and enchanting the heart, god Śiva fixed his heart on her indeed, when she showed to be enamoured of him through her ogling.

25. Being deprived of his wisdom, sense of decency and discernment, by her, and overcome with erotic passions evoked by her, he lost his sense of shame and approached her even while (his divine consort) Pārvatī stood gazing.

26. Seeing him approaching, she, being stripped of clothes, became extremely abashed. She concealed herself behind the tree laughing but did not linger (anywhere).

27. The divine Śiva whose senses (control of mind)

were robbed away¹ (by the damsel) and was overpowered by passions, pursued her as the leader of elephant would follow a she-elephant.

28. Running after her with great speed, and seizing her by the locks of her hair, he dragged her near him and hugged her in his arms, despite her unwillingness.

29. Being closely embraced by god Śiva, like unto a she-elephant by an elephant, she wriggled to and fro (within his arms) and got her hair dishevelled.

30. Having extricated herself from the arms of the great god, she ran away fast, despite her big hips, as she was the Māyā (deluding potency) created by the Lord, Oh dear king.

31. Being completely overwhelmed with passion, like that by his enemy, the above-described Rudra followed the footsteps of the damsel, created by Lord Viṣṇu of miraculous exploits.

32. While running after her, the semen of Śiva of unfailing procreative capacity, went on escaping like that of a big bull-leader of a herd pursuing a fecundable cow or as that of a rutting leader-elephant running after a fertilizable she-elephant.

33. Oh ruler of the earth ! The various places on earth where the seed of that great-souled god fell, became the areas of silver and gold ores.

34.* Thus in the course of his pursuit (of the damsel), god Śiva was found (pursuing her) on the banks of the rivers and lakes on the mountains, in forests and gardens and wherever sages lived.

35. When his semen was completely escaped, he realized that he had been befooled by the Māyā of God Viṣṇu and he recovered himself completely from that delusion, Oh great king.

36. They say that god Śiva who thus fully realized the greatness of Lord Viṣṇu, his own soul, and the soul of the

1. VJ.'s v.l. *pramathitendriyaḥ*—whose senses were extremely provoked.

* GS. remarks that hereby Lord Viṣṇu demonstrated to the sages how even god Śiva had fallen from his yogic status, and thus indirectly emphasized that they should keep themselves aloof from women.

Universe, did not regard it (his being deluded) as in any way wonderful in the case of the Lord of incomprehensible prowess.

37. Perceiving that Śiva is unaffected by remorse and the sense of shame, Lord Viṣṇu (the slayer of demon Madhu) was highly pleased, and assuming his male form, he addressed him thus.

The Lord said :

38. I am glad that even though you have been deluded by my (irresistible) Māyā (deluding potency) in the form of a damsel, Oh dear one ! you, of your own accord, have recovered your normal state of passionlessness or ego-lessness born of devotion (which is impossible in the case of any other god. Hence I address you as) the greatest god.

39. What man, with the exception of you, whence once caught in the snare of delusion, can overcome My Māyā which brings forth various objects (of enjoyment) and becomes extremely difficult to get over, by persons lacking in self-control.

40. This Māyā consisting of attributes (viz. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) functions under my control (who am the Time-spirit,) for the purpose (of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe), by means of the parts (such as *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*). She shall not henceforth overpower you.

Śrī Śuka said :

41. In this way, he (god Śiva) who was honoured by an embrace by Lord Viṣṇu bearing the Śrīvatsa mark on the bosom, took his leave of him, (respectfully) circumambulated him and returned to his own abode along with his retinue.

42. Later on, while being eulogized by great sages, the glorious god Śiva (the source of the Universe) lovingly spoke to his spouse Pārvatī about the Māyā which was a part of the Soul (of the Universe, viz.) Lord Viṣṇu, Oh scion of Bharata.

43. "Have you observed the deluding potency of the Unborn Supreme Person, the transcendental Deity whereby

I, prominent one of his digits (rays), became helpless and succumbed to delusion ? What to speak of others who are not the masters of their own selves ?

44. He is that same Eternal Ancient Person, unaffected by Time, and incomprehensible to the Vedas,—The Person about whom you enquired of me at the end of my deep *yogic* meditation which lasted one thousand years."

Śrī Śuka said :

45. Oh Child ! In this way has been related to you the exploit of Lord Viṣṇu, the wielder of Śārṅga bow by whom the great mount (Mandara) was supported on his back while the ocean was being churned (for getting the nectar).

46. Never and in no way shall fail the exertions of a person who constantly chants or listens to the account of this (glorious deed of Hari), or the chanting of the glorious attributes of the Lord of excellent renown relieves one of all the troubles of *samsāra*.

47. I bow unto the feet of the Lord who though beyond the reach of the evil ones, is accessible through devotion; who, deluding the enemies of gods by assuming the disguise of a young damsel, made the foremost of gods who resorted to him to drink the nectar churned out of the (milky) sea, and who fulfils all the desires of those who approach him (for asylum).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Description of the Future Manvantaras

Śrī Śuka resumed:

1. The present, seventh Manu is known as Śrāddha-deva. He is the son of Vivasvān. Now hear from me the names of his sons.

2. They are Ikṣvāku, Nabhaga, Dhṛṣṭa, Śaryāti, Nariṣyanta, Nābhāga and the seventh is called Diṣṭa.

3. Kāruṣa, Paruṣa and the tenth is known as Vasumān—these are the ten sons of Vaivasvata Manu, Oh tormentor of the enemies. —

4. The (twelve) Ādityas, the (eight) Vasus, the (eleven) Rudras, the (ten) Viśvedevas, the (forty-nine) Maruts (wind-god), two Aśvinī-kumāras, the (three) Ṛbhus are (the seven grades of) gods and their Indra (ruling god) is Purandara, Oh King.

5. Kaśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadvāja—These seven are regarded as the seven (principal) sages.

6. Even in this Manvantara, there was the incarnation of the Lord, born of Kaśyapa and Aditi. Lord Viṣṇu, assuming the form of a dwarf, was born as the youngest son of Aditi.

7. The (first) seven Manvantaras have been described to you briefly by me. Now I shall narrate to you the future ones, associated with the powers (incarnations) of Viṣṇu.

8. Vivasvān had two wives, both being the daughters of Viśvakarman. They were Sandhyā and Chāyā about whom I have spoken to you, Oh king of kings.¹

9. Some say that he had a third wife called Vaḍavā.² Out of the three wives, the children of Samjñā were three—Yama, Yamī and Śrāddhadeva. Now listen to the names of Chāyā's children—

10. Sāvarṇi, the daughter Tapatī who became the wife of Samvaraṇa and the third son Śanaīścara (the presiding deity of the planet Saturn). The two Aśvinīkumāras were the sons of Vaḍavā.

11. When the eighth Manvantara will set in, Sāvarṇi will be the Manu. Nirmoka, Virajaska and others are the sons of Sāvarṇi, Oh King.

12. Then (in the 8th Manvantara), Sutapas, Virajas and Amṛta-prabhas are going to be the gods. Their ruling god (Indra) will be Bali, the son of Virocana.

13. Having donated the whole of this earth to Viṣṇu who begged for only three paces of land (in this Manvantara), he will relinquish his eminent position of Indra (attained by

1. *Vide Supra* 6.6. 40-41.

2. But according to the 'Bh. P. *Supra* 6.6.40 Samjñā assumed the form of Vaḍavā and gave birth to Aśvinī kumāras.

him through Viṣṇu's grace in the next *Manvantara*), and will attain to final beatitude.

14. That same Bali who was bound down by the Lord who, when pleased, installed him in the Nether world Sutala which is superior to the *Svarga* in splendour—still rules there like the king of the heavenly regions.

15-16. Gālava, the glorious (Paraśu-) Rāma, Aśvatthāman, the son of Droṇa, Kṛpa, Ṛṣyaśṛṅga and our father the venerable Bādarāyaṇa—these will be the seven sages. Even now they continue to occupy their own hermitages through their *yogic* powers.

17. The Lord will incarnate with the name Sārva-bhauma, from Devaguhyā and Sarasvatī (as his parents). The powerful Lord will wrest Indrahood from Purandara and confer it on Bali.

18. The ninth Manu will be Dakṣa-Sāvarṇi who will be born of Varuṇa. Bhūtaketu, Dīptiketū and others¹ will be his sons, Oh King.

19. Pāras and Maricigarbhas and others (viz. Sudharmans)² will be (the three categories of) gods then. It is traditionally reported that Adbhuta will be the Indra. Then there will be the seven sages of whom Dyutimat³ is prominent.

20. A ray of the Lord will incarnate under the name Ṛṣabha from Āyusmat and Ambudharā (as his father and mother). Adbhuta, the Indra, will enjoy the three worlds conquered (for him) by Ṛṣabha.

21. The tenth Manu will be Brahma-sāvarṇi, the great son of Upaśloka. His sons are Bhūriṣeṇa and others while Haviṣmat and others will be prominent Brāhmaṇa (sages).

22. Haviṣmān, Sukṛti, Satya, Jaya, Mūrti will be (some of) the Brāhmaṇa (sages) then. Suvāsana and Viruddha are the gods, and Śambhu is the Lord of gods.

1. VP. 3.2.22 adds Dhṛtaketu, Nirāmaya, Pañca-hasta and Pṛthuśrava to this list.

2. VP. 3.2.20-21 adds this third category and each category will consist of 12 gods.

3. The VP. 3.2.22 gives the complete list as follows :

Dyutimat, Savana, Bhavya, Vasu, Medhātithi, Jyotiṣmān and Satya.

23. The Lord, with a part of his Self, will be born in the house of Viśvasṛj (Prajāpati) through Viṣūci, and be known as Viśvaksena. He will make friends (render help to Śambhu (the then Indra)).

24. The self-controlled Dharma-sāvarṇi will be the eleventh Manu who will have ten sons as Satyadharma and others.

25. The (categories of) gods will be Vihāṅgamas, Kāmagamas and Nirvāṇarucis. Their ruler Indra will be Vaidhṛta, while Aruṇa and others¹ will be the (seven) sages.

26. The ray (part) of Hari known as Dharmasetu, the son of Āryaka through Vaidhṛta, will sustain and protect the three worlds.

27. Oh King, the twelfth Manu will be Rudra-sāvarṇi and his sons will be Devavān, Upadeva, Devaśreṣṭha and others.

28. Then Ṛtadhāman will be the Indra and the (groups of) gods will be Harita and others.² And the (seven) sages will be Tapo-mūrti, Tapasvin, Āgnīdhṛta and others.³

29. A part of Hari, by name Svadhāman, the mighty son of Satya-sahas and Sūnṛtā will protect this period of Manu.

30. The thirteenth Manu will be the self-controlled Devasāvarṇi and the sons of Devasāvarṇi are Citrasena, Vicitra and others.

31. The (classes of) gods will be designated as Sukarma and Sutrāma⁴ and Divaspati. Then Nirmoka, Tattvadarśin and others will be the (seven sages⁵).

32. The ray of Lord Hari, the master of *yoga*, will be

1. GS quotes from the *Harivamśa* the following sages implied in *ādi* : Haviṣmān, Vapuṣmān, Aruṇa, Anagha, Urudhi, Niścara and Agnitejas.

2. VP. 3.2.33 enumerates Harita, Rohita, Sumanas, Sukarman and Surāpa as the five groups (*gaṇas*) of gods.

3. The list in VP. 3.2.34 includes Tapasvin, Sutapas, Tapomūrti, Taporati, Tapo-dhṛti, Tapo-dyuti and Tapo-dhana.

4. VP. 3.2.37-39 adds Sudharman as the third class and each class consists of 33 gods.

5. The list in VP (above) differs. It consists of Nirmoha, Tattvadarśin, Niṣprakampya, Nirutsuka, Dhṛtimān, Avyaya and Sutapas.

born as the son of Devahotra through Br̥hatī and will procure the kingdom of three worlds to the Indra, Divaspati.

33. They say that Indra-sāvarṇi will come as the fourteenth Manu, and the sons born of him will be Uru, Gambhīrabuddhi and others.

34. The (categories of) gods will be Pavitra, Cākṣuṣa and others¹, while Śuci will be the Indra. Agnibāhu, Śuci, Śuddha, Māgadha and others will be the (seven sages).²

35. Then Hari will incarnate as the son Satrāyaṇa and Vitānā, and will be called Br̥hadbhānu. He will continue the course of sacrificial rituals, Oh great King.

36. These fourteen Manu periods relating to the past, present and future have been described to you, Oh king. It is by these (Manu periods) that the Kalpa comprising one thousand yugas, is measured.

37*. A person who narrates or listens to the narration of the story of the fourteen Manus will find Viṣṇu gracious unto him.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Duties of Manus and Their Functionaries

The King (Parikṣit) asked :

1. Be pleased to explain to me, Oh worshipful sage, how and by whom are these Manus and others employed for the execution of what (particular) function during the Manvantaras.

The sage (Śuka) replied :

2. Oh King ! Manus, sons of Manus, Sages, Indras,

1. VP. adds Kaniṣṭha, Bhrājata and Vācāvṛddha as three categories. (i.e. in all five)—Ibid 3.2.41.

2. VP. adds Agnidhra, Yukta and Jita and completes the list of seven sages.—Ibid 3.2.42.

* A probable interpolation recorded in the Bombay edition (e.g. D.S. Yande's edition of the Bh. P.).

gods—all these (five categories of functionaries) are under the control of the Supreme Person.

3. Directed by the aforesaid forms of the Supreme Person such as the incarnation called Yajña and others, Manu and other functionaries carry on the work of the world.

4. At the end of the quartet of *yugas* (i. e. at the beginning of the new *Kṛta-yuga*), the sages, by dint of their asceticism and penance, saw the corpus of the *Vedic* texts 'swallowed up' by Time, through the help of which the Eternal Law (Religion) becomes known.

5. Then Manus are instructed by Hari in the path of righteousness, characterised by four feet (viz. penance, bodily and mental purity, compassion and truth). Remaining controlled in mind, they propagate the path of righteousness all over the world during their period, Oh King.

6. The protectors of the subjects (viz. the sons of Manu) themselves and through their descendants protect the path of righteousness (*dharma*)—and the earth—to the end of that Manvantara, while gods along with others who are eligible for sacrificial shares, enjoy their shares in the sacrificial oblations.

7. Enjoying the excellent affluence and fortune of the three worlds conferred upon him (out of grace) by the Supreme Lord, Indra protects the three worlds and sends down at will showers of rain.

8. Assuming in every *Yuga*, the form of Siddhas (like Sanaka) the sages (like Yājñavalkya) and masters of Yoga (like Datta), Hari teaches the paths of knowledge (*Jñāna*), action (*Karman*) and *Yoga* (respectively).

9. He carried out the work of creation by assuming the form of *Prajāpatis* (Progenitors of the world like Marīci). He kills robbers etc. by appearing as an independent monarch. And possessing different characteristics, in the form of Time, he destroys all.

10. The Lord is never perceived, though praised highly by the people who are deluded by the *Māyā* (consisting) of various names and forms. Nor is he realized by various systems of philosophy.

11. The measures of the minor *Kalpas* (forming one

day of *Brahmā*) which are the subdivisions of the great *Kalpa* (the lifetime of *Brahmā*) have been described to you. Those well-versed in ancient lore state that this *Kalpa* consists of fourteen *Manvantaras*.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Bali's Conquest of the Svarga (Celestial Region)

The King Parīkṣit said:

1. For what purpose did Lord Hari, though himself the Supreme Ruler, beg like a miserable fellow, three paces of land from Bali? Why did he bind him down even though he got his object sought for?

2. This we desire to know thoroughly as it is highly surprising to us that the Lord of sacrifices, (though) Perfect (in all respects within himself), begged like a destitute and (subsequently) bound down (with fetters) the innocent (donor).

Śrī Śuka said:

3. Being deprived of his splendour, wealth as well as his life through being defeated by Indra in a battle, Bali was revived by Śukra and other members of the Bhṛgu clan, Oh king. The noble-minded Bali, with utmost faith, resorted to the Bhṛgus as a disciple, offering them whatever they desired.

4. The Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgu clan, endowed as they were with extra-ordinary powers and were pleased with him, consecrated him with the great sacred ablution (called *aindra*—Pertaining to Indra) with due formalities, (as prescribed in the *Bahurc Brāhmaṇa*), and desirous as he was of conquering the celestial region, made him perform the *Viśvajit* sacrifice.¹

1. This order of 'consecration' (*abhiṣeka*) and performance of sacrifice is given by G.S. In the *Viśvajit* sacrifice the sacrificer has to give all wealth (after separating the share of the eldest son and land).—Kane's *Hist. of Dh. Śāstra* II. ii. 1212, Fn. 2644.

5-6. From the sacrificial fire duly worshipped with oblations, there emerged a chariot strengthened with gold plates, horses of the same colour (green) as those of Indra, a banner blazing the emblem of a lion, a celestial bow fastened with plates of gold, a pair of inexhaustible quivers full of arrows, a divine coat of mail. His grandfather (Prahāda) conferred on him a wreath of never-fading flowers and Śukra (his preceptor), a conch.

7. Thus with all the military equipment procured for him by Brāhmaṇas, and having got the *Svastyayana* (auspicious rites) performed through them, Bali circumambulated them respectfully, paid obeisance to them and taking his leave of Prahāda, bowed down to him.

8-9. Ascending into the celestial chariot conferred upon him by the Bhṛguś (Śukra and his clansmen, by performing the sacrifice), the mighty (chariot) warrior 'Bali, wearing that excellent wreath, put on his armour, armed himself with the bow, the sword and tied up the (inexhaustible) quivers. With his arms radiant with gold armlets and with dazzling ear-rings (of the shape of an alligator) he shone like the fire blazing in its sacrificial place, when he mounted the chariot.

10-11. Accompanied by his retinue and commanders of (other) Daitya legions who were his equals in command, prowess and splendour, and were (as if) drinking the skies and burning the quarters with (their glaring) eyes, and leading the surrounding mighty Daitya army, he marched against the highly prosperous capital of Indra, shaking as it were the heaven and the earth (by its thumping march).

12. The city appeared beautiful with its splendid gardens and parks like Nandana and others, resonant with its warbling pairs of birds and humming intoxicated black-bees.

13. (It looked charming) with the celestial trees whose branches were heavily laden with tender foliage, fruits and blossoms of flowers, with lotus-ponds thereof, full of aquatic birds like swans, cranes, ruddy geese (*Cakrāhva*), and ducks and young celestials, damsels engaged in watersports with gods therein.

14. It was girt on all sides by the heavenly Gaṅgā (andākinī) as its moat. It was surrounded with fortifica-

tions of gold, shining like fire and was provided with high towers.

15. Constructed by Viśvakarmā, the entrance and doors of the houses were fitted with panels of gold while the city-gates were of crystals and all the roads were well laid down.

16. It appeared beautiful with its assembly halls, quadrangles and streets; it was full of trillions of mansions (or heavenly cars); the quadrangles were paved with precious stones and platforms were studded with diamonds and corals.

17. There young damsels of eternal youth and unfading beauty (ever) appearing sixteen years of age, wearing purest raiment, appeared resplendent like fires ablaze with flames.

18. Breezes wafting the fragrance of wreathes of fresh flowers dropped down from the braids of hair of the heavenly damsels blow through its streets.

19. The beloveds of gods (Heavenly nymphs) pace through the streets, covered with whitish fragrant fumes of the *aguru* (a kind of sandal-wood) that escape through the gold-windows (of houses).

20. It was covered with pearl-canopies and flag-staffs studded with precious stones, and balconies decorated all around with buntings. It was resonant with notes of peacocks, pigeons, hummings of black-bees and appeared gay and auspicious by the sweet songs of celestial damsels.

21. It was pleasing to the mind with its sounds of *mṛdāṅga*, conchs, drums and kettle-drums, as also with the sweet rhythmic sound of lutes, *murajas*, *ṛṣṭis* (kind of musical instruments) and flutes regulated to the beat of the cymbals, with dances accompanied with orchestral music and songs of demigods (such as Gandharvas, Kinnaras) and had surpassed with its effulgence, the presiding deity of lustre.¹

22. The impious, wicked, the cruel to other beings, the rogues, the proud, the lustful and the avaricious have no access to it; only those who are free from these defects can reach it.

23. (Bali) the commander-in-chief of that army, laid siege to the capital of gods with his forces and blew his

1. v.l. The presiding deities of the sun and other planets.

tremendously sounding conch conferred on him by his preceptor, striking terror in the hearts of Indra's women.

24. Comprehending the full implications of the supreme efforts of Bali, Indra, accompanied by all the legions of gods (approached) his preceptor (Bṛhaspati) and spoke to him as follows :

25. "Worshipful Sir ! Tremendous are the (military) preparations of Bali, our old arch-enemy. Me-thinks, they are (now) irresistible. By what energy has he become so overwhelmingly powerful?

26. None is able by any means whatever to approach him or withstand him. He is swallowing the world with his mouth, licking (as it were) the ten quarters, and burning them down by his fiery eyes. He has emerged against us like the fire of dissolution consuming the universe.

27. Be pleased to disclose to me the cause of the irresistibleness of my foe, whereby he derived this energy, mental courage and physical power and prowess and was enabled to make such tremendous efforts.

The Preceptor (Bṛhaspati) Explained :

28. "I know, Oh Indra, the cause of this growth of power of your enemy. It is due to the infusion of spiritual energy in their disciple by those experts in Vedic lore, the Bhṛḡus (in exchange of the surrender of all his property to them).

29. With the exception of the Almighty Ruler Hari neither your compeer nor you can stand before him (for confrontation) like human beings before the god of death.

30. Therefore, all of you should now quit the celestial region and go in hiding, biding your favourable time which would bring in the decline of your enemy.

31. With the spiritual power of the Brāhmaṇas, he is getting stronger still and is now of irresistible prowess. (In due course) by insulting those very Brāhmaṇas, he will meet destruction along with his kith and kin."

32. Having thus received a wise counsel after mature deliberation from their preceptor who viewed (the reality of the situation in the proper perspective) gods, being capable of assuming any form they like, vacated the celestial region.

33. When the gods disappeared, Bali, the son of Virocana established himself in the capital of gods and brought under control all the three worlds.

34. Bhṛgu who were affectionate to their disciple who had (now) conquered the universe, and who was devoted to them, made him perform one hundred horse sacrifices (to stabilise his Indra-hood).

35. By virtue of his greatness in the performance of one hundred horse-sacrifices he diffused his reputation, already known all over the three worlds, in all quarters and shone like the moon, the lord of stars.

36. Considering himself as one who had accomplished all his desires, the noble-minded Bali enjoyed the highly prosperous royal fortune blessed upon him by Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Instruction in the observance of Payovrata to Aditi

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When her sons thus disappeared and the celestial regions were arrogated to themselves by Daityas (Diti's son), Aditi, the mother of gods, was tormented like a helpless person.

2. Once, rising from his spiritual meditation of a long duration, the worshipful sage Kāśyapa (Aditi's husband) visited her hermitage which was cheerless and gloomy (devoid of joyful atmosphere).

3. Oh best of Kurus ! Received (by his wife) with due formalities and occupying the seat (offered by her), he spoke thus to his wife, whose countenance was mournful.

4. Oh auspicious lady ! I trust nothing inauspicious has befallen¹ the Brāhmaṇas in the world, of late. I believe nothing calamitous has happened to Dharma. I hope that

1. For *āgataṃ*, VR reads *gavāṃ* : 'in the case of the cows as well'.

misfortune has not overtaken the people who are subject to the whims of death.¹

5. Or was there any obstruction in carrying out righteous duties with respect to *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* in your household where people who do not follow the practice of *yoga*, get the fruits thereof (by disinterested performance of prescribed house-hold duties), Oh mistress of the household.

6. I believe guests, having visited your house, have not gone back, at any time, without being duly received with courtesies like going forth to welcome them, as you might have been engaged in household duties.

7. If new-comers visiting a house go away from it without being honoured with the offer of water at least, such houses are certainly no better than the dens of big jackals.

8. Have not the sacred fires been offered oblations at the proper time on any day by you, as your mind must have been stricken with anxiety due to my departure, Oh fair lady !

9. The Brāhmaṇa and the (sacrificial) fire by worshipping whom a householder attains to regions (like *svarga*) yielding all the desired objects, are verily the mouth of Lord Viṣṇu, the soul of all gods.

10. Oh high-minded lady ! Are all your sons doing well and happy? I perceive through your outward expressions (like pale-facedness) that your heart is not at ease.

Aditi replied :

11. Oh Brahman ! It is all well with the twice-born persons (like Brāhmaṇas), cows; so is the case with righteousness and with this person (me). Oh Lord of the house ! This house (of yours) is the most excellent source of the three objectives of human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*).

12. It is due to my devoted contemplation about your worshipful self that nothing is lacking and the sacrificial fires, guests, servants and mendicants desirous of getting something, are properly attended to.

13. Oh worshipful lord ! What desire cherished in my

1. VJ. takes *chandānuvartinaḥ* as an adj. qualifying *mṛtyu* implying 'through the god of death who acts according to whim'.

heart can remain unfulfilled when you, the lord of creation and the guardian of the well-being of my children in this way, advise me on religious matters.

14. Oh son of Marīci ! All these beings imbrued predominantly with *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* severally are born of your mind or body. (It is quite natural that) you are therefore equally attached to them all. But even the Supreme Lord (who creates the whole of the universe has special attachment to his devotees.

15. Oh Lord ! Be pleased to think of the well being of mine who have been serving you, Oh excellent observer of vows ! We (I and my sons) have been deprived of our wealth and have been ousted from our abodes by the sons of my rival (Diti). Kindly protect us, Oh Lord !

16. Being deprived of my power, splendour, glory and place of residence by powerful enemies, I have been exiled and have consequently immersed in a sea of calamities.

17. Oh foremost guardian of our welfare ! Be pleased to think out such effective device by your intellect as will enable my sons to recover them all.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. Kāśyapa who was thus entreated by Aditi, spoke to her as if with a bit of smile : “Oh how mighty is the power of Lord Viṣṇu’s delusive potency (*māyā*) ! The whole world is bound down with affection.

19. There is absolutely no relation between the material body which is different from the soul and the soul who transcends *Prakṛti*. Whose and who are the husband, sons and other relatives ? Delusion alone is the cause of this attachment.

20. Worship therefore the Supreme Person, the glorious Lord Janārdana, the all-pervading God who resides in the heart of all beings, and is the Father and Preceptor of the Universe.

21. Lord Hari is merciful unto the afflicted and shall grant all your desires (even if there may be some deficiencies in devotion). Unfailingly fruitful is the devotion unto

the Lord (and not to any other god). This is my conviction (about the efficacy of devotion).

Aditi requested :

22. By what procedure I should worship the Protector of the world so that he, of effective mental resolve, may grant me my desired object, Oh Brahman !

23. Be pleased to instruct me, oh best of Brāhmaṇas, in that method of worshipping the Lord whereby He will be immediately pleased with me who am sunk in despondency along with my children.

Kaśyapa said :

24. The worshipful Lotus-born god Brahmā was accosted for this by me when desirous of progeny. As narrated by him, I shall now explain to you the sacred vow that leads to the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu (Keśava.)

25. Subsisting purely on milk during the first twelve days of the bright half of the month of Phālguna, one should worship the Lotus-eyed Lord Viṣṇu with the utmost devotion.

26. On the day preceding the new moon (when the moon rises with a scarcely visible crescent) one should besmear one's body with earth, turned over by the wild-boar, if available and take bath. While standing in the middle of the current, he should recite the following *mantra* :

27. "Oh goddess ! You were lifted up from Rasātala (the nether-most region) by the Lord (assuming the form of) the Primitive Boar, with a view to secure a place (for living beings). I respectfully bow to you. Be pleased to absolve me of all my sins".

28. After completing one's daily routine of religious duties, with a serene and concentrated mind, one should worship God either in an image, or on a consecrated altar or in the sun, water, fire or even in the preceptor. (For invoking the diety, the following nine *Mantras* are to be recited).

29. Obeisance to you the glorious Lord, the Supreme Person, the greatest of the great, the abode of all created beings, (and hence called) the all-pervading Vāsudeva the witness to all and everything).

30. Salutations to the unmanifest¹ and the subtle, who is both Prakṛti (Primordial matter) and Puruṣa (the spirit)—pervading them as their *antar-yāmin* (the indwelling Principle), who comprehends twenty-four Principles² and is the founder of the Sāṅkhya system.³

31*. Hail to you who have two heads, three feet, four horns; who confer fruit of sacrifices etc., the possessor of seven hands, who are himself the sacrifice and the soul of the three *Vedas* (or are described in three *Vedas*).

32**. I bow to you who are Śiva (all auspiciousness) and Rudra. Hail to you the (wielder) of Śakti (Power).

1. Cf. Muṇḍaka up. 1.1.6.

2. These principles are subsidiary causes and as his attributes they do not exist separately. VC. thinks that the 24 *guṇas* are the categories of *Vaiśeṣikas* and may mean *Sāṅkhyatattvas* also.

3. VJ. reads : *guṇasamsthāna-hetave*.

* (i). ŚR compares this verse with the famous description of the Fire-god *Catvāri Śṛṅgā trayo asya pādā* etc. in the RV 4.58.3 and quotes Yāska's explanation as follows :

Two heads—the rites called *prāyaṇīya* & *Udayanīya*.

The three feet—three *savanas* or pressing out of the *soma* juice which is to be done in the morning, at midday and in the evening.

Four horns—the four *Vedas*.

Seven arms—the seven Vedic metres (*chandas*) viz. *Gāyatrī*, *Triṣṭubh*, *Anuṣṭubh*, *Bṛhati*, *Pañkti*, *Jagatī* and *Uṣṇik*.

(ii) VJ. has accepted the above explanation of the metaphorical description but the 2nd line : 'Salutation to Lord Viṣṇu who is the *antaryāmin* (*ātmane*) of the performers of *Soma* sacrifice as enjoined in the *Vedas* (*Trayī Vidyā*).

(iii) VR. gives a totally different interpretation.

The whole universe of name and form is an attribute of the Lord. He is metaphorically described as a bull (*Vṛṣabha*) with four horns viz., names (nouns), verbs, indeclinables and prefixes (*nāma-ākhyāta-nipāta-upasargāḥ*). The three feet are three divisions of time : past, present and future; the two heads are : the essential attribute (*pravṛtti-nimitta*) and that in which the attribute lies (*tadāśrayaḥ*). The seven hands are the seven cases of declension (of nouns etc.). The Lord is known through *Vedas*. Hence he is the soul of the *Vedas*. He is Viṣṇu or sacrifice (*Tajño vai Viṣṇuḥ*) through whom men can extend the performance of sacrifice (*śantave*).

** VR regards Viṣṇu as the *antaryāmin* of Rudra (and other gods) as he is the real creator, protector and destroyer of the world.

Salutation to you the master of all *lores*¹ or knowledge and the Protector of all created beings.

33. Obeisance to *Hiraṇyagarbha* (god Brahmā), *Prāṇa* (i.e. *sūtrātman*, the soul of the subtle cosmic body), the soul of the universe. Hail to you, the embodiment of the highest powers acquired by *yoga* and the source of *yoga* (*yogic lore*).

34. Salutations to you the First (Eternal) God. I bow to you who are the witness (to everything). Hail to you the omniscient sage Nārāyaṇa and to Nara who are the manifestations of Hari.

35. Bow to you whose person is dark like emerald in complexion and who have been the master of the goddess Śrī. Salutation to you, Oh Keśava, the wearer of yellow garment.

36. You are the conferrer of all boons to people. Hence you are most sought for, Oh most prominent bestower of blessings. It is hence that wise men adore the dust of your feet for the final beatitude.

37. May that glorious Lord be gracious to me—the Lord who is worshipped by gods and Lakṣmī, as if they desired to have the fragrance of His Lotus-like feet.

38. Having reverentially established the presence of Viṣṇu, the Lord of Senses, before one's self, by invoking him with these *mantras*, one should with faith, worship him, by offering water for washing the feet (*pādya*), for *ācamana* (sipping and rinsing the mouth) and other formalities of reception.

39. One should worship the Lord with fragrant sandal paste, flowers and other articles of worship and should perform his sacred ablution (*abhiṣeka*) with milk. He should then adore him by beautifying his person with clothes, sacred thread, ornaments and with water for again washing his feet and sipping water as *ācamana*, burning fragrant incense etc. before him, reciting all the while the twelve-syllabled *mantra* : OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VĀSUDEVĀYA.

40. If one can afford it (lit. If there is sufficient wealth), one should offer fragrant, white rice cooked.

1. *Sarva-vidyādhipataye*—The preceptor of the knowledge which helps to achieve the four *puruṣārthas*—GD.

in milk, mixed with ghee and raw sugar, as an offering (*naivedya*) to him, and should pour it as oblations into the sacred fire chanting the root *mantra* (viz. the above-mentioned *mantra* of twelve syllables)¹.

41. One may give this offering (of boiled rice) to God to a devotee (of the Lord) or should eat it oneself. Having offered water as *ācamana* one should offer betel-leaves (with all the components like areca-nut powder, cardamom seeds, cloves etc.) finally.

42. One should chant this *mantra* (within one's mind) one hundred and eight times, and praise God with panygerics. Circumambulating him by the right side, one should prostrate one's self before him like a rod, with delight.

43. Reverentially placing on one's own head the remnants (flowers etc.) of the worship, one should pray the Deity to retire. One should then feed at least a couple of Brāhmaṇas with rice cooked in milk (and mixed with gur etc.).

44-45. Obtaining the assent of the Brāhmaṇas who are duly honoured (by giving betel-leaves, gift of money etc.), one should partake of the remaining food in company of his dear ones. On the night of the first day, one should observe strict continence. And on the next morning, he should take bath. Keeping himself undefiled according to the procedure laid down, and with composed and concentrated mind, he should perform the ablution of the deity with milk, and worship him (and as per details of worship given above) and thus observe the vow every day), till the period of the observance is completed.

46. Subsisting on milk-food and with full faith and devotion in the worship of Viṣṇu, one should continue to observe this vow. He should offer oblations to the sacred fire as before, and give food to the Brāhmaṇas as well.

1. With due respect to all these commentators, the translator feels that due to the obvious influence of the *Paścādītra* on these verses, the *māla-mantra* must be OM NAMO NĀRĀYAṆĀYA and NOT Om Namo Bhagavate Vāṇdevya, though consistency in *Mantras* is essential.

47. In this way, observing the vow of 'subsistence on milk' from day to day, he should, for a period of twelve days, perform the propitiation of Lord Hari, offering oblations to the sacred fire, worship of the image and gratification of Brāhmaṇas (with food, gift of money etc.).

48. Beginning from the first day (of the bright half of the month of Phālguna) to the thirteenth, he should observe strict continence, sleep on bare ground and take bath three times a day (viz. in the morning, at midday and in the evening).

49. He should avoid speaking the untruth and on unholy topics (as well as with evil persons). He should refrain from pleasures of high or low order; he should abstain from injury to any being, and be absolutely devoted to Vāsudeva only.

50. On the thirtieth day, he should arrange for the ablution of Lord Viṣṇu with five substances (viz. milk, curds, ghee, honey and sugar which are collectively known as *pañcāmṛta*) according to the procedure laid down in the *Śāstras*, and under the guidance of the experts in them.

51-52. Without any mean miserliness in expending money, he should perform the worship of Viṣṇu on a grand scale. For the sake of Viṣṇu who pervaded all light, he should cook rice in milk (mixed with ghee etc.) and with fully concentrated and serene mind he should offer oblations to the sacred fire, and through it propitiate the Supreme Man. He should also offer food of excellent quality (containing articles of six types of tastes and free from any impurity or non-vegetarian food) which may be enjoyable and gratifying to the Supreme Person.

53. He should then gratify the learned preceptor (who conducted the worship) as well as those who carried out the sacrificial part, with articles of dress, ornaments and cows. He should note that to be also the propitiation of Lord Hari.

54. Oh lady with charming smiles ! One should then cater to them dainty food of high quality as also to other Brāhmaṇas who might have come there, according to one's (financial) capacity.

55. One should then give *dakṣiṇā* (gift for performing

religious rites) according to merits, to the preceptor as well as to other Brāhmaṇas. One should also gratify with food etc. all those who have assembled there, including *caṇḍālas*.

56. Having gratified all indigent, blind, pitiable persons with food and understanding that that gratification is the real propitiation of Viṣṇu, one should lastly enjoy the food along with one's relatives.

57. Every day the worship of the Lord should be conducted with dancing, instrumental and vocal music, recitation of glorifying hymns and benedictory sayings and narration of the holy episodes of the Lord.

58. This is called *Payovrata*, the most excellent vow for propitiating the Supreme Person. What has been explained to me by god Brahmā has been communicated to you.

59. Oh most fortunate lady ! By properly and correctly observing this vow, and with your heart full of purity and devotion, and mind under control, worship Lord Keśava.

60. This is traditionally regarded as the perfect (or the essence of all kinds of) sacrifice and the perfect vow (the essence of all vows). This is the essence of penance and donations which leads to the gratification of the Lord, Oh fair lady !

61. That by which god Viṣṇu, the Supra-Sensuous deity, is propitiated are the real *Niyamas* (restraints of the mind), and the excellent *yamas* (controls of bodily discipline), the real penance, gifts, vow and sacrifice.

62. Therefore, Oh fair lady, with utmost self-discipline and devotion, you observe this vow, being pleased wherewith the Lord shall soon confer your cherished boons on you.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Manifestation of the Lord as Vāmana

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Aditi who was thus instructed by her husband Kasyapa diligently observed this (*payovrata*) vow consecutively for twelve days, Oh king !

2. Having controlled the wild horses of her sense-organs through (the power of) her mind and with her reasoning power as the charioteer, she meditated with undivided mind and intellect upon the Supreme Person, the Controller, of the universe.

3. Concentrating her mind with her one-pointed reason on the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the soul of all beings, Aditi verily observed the *Payovrata*.

4. (On completion of the observance) Oh child Parīkṣit, the Almighty Lord, the Eternal (First) Person manifested himself before her (in a form) clad in yellow garment with four arms wielding in (three of) them a conch, a discus and a mace.

5. On beholding him suddenly in a visible form, she was overwhelmed with love, and reverentially laid herself prostrate on the ground before him, like a rod.

6. She rose up and with folded palms stood before him to praise him but (being overwhelmed with love she could not do so. With her eyes overflowing with tears of joy, she remained silent. Her hair were standing on their ends all over her person, and her limbs were trembling with ecstatic joy at his sight.

7. Oh Scion of the Kuru race ! The goddess Aditi looked at him affectionately as if drinking up that consort of Lakṣmī, the Lord of the universe and of the sacrifice, with her eyes, while she praised him slowly in a faltering voice, full of love.

Aditi began :

8. Oh Lord of sacrifices (who confer the fruit of sacrifices upon the performers) ! Oh sacrifice incarnate ! Oh imperishable Lord, at whose feet holy waters (like the Gaṅgā) resort, Oh Lord of hallowed glory, the hearing of whose name is auspicious¹ and whose very appearance relieves the sins and inequities of those who seek refuge in you, You are

1. ' *tīrtha-śraṇa-nāmadhryam*

The ears (of persons) who are devoted to Śāstric studies and who listen to Śāstras, become auspicious on hearing your Name, Oh Lord.—VJ.

the protector of the afflicted. Be pleased to secure (our) happiness (to us).

9. I bow down to you, Oh Lord Hari who are very great, immanent in the universe, and yet assume at your free will the *guṇas* (the modes of *prakṛti* and other powers of the *Māyā*) for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, and are still self-poised (well established in your grandeur without the least disturbance), and who have completely dispelled the darkness (of ignorance, *tamas* or *māyā*) within yourself, by your eternal, perfect wisdom.

10. The longest life-span (viz. two *parārdha* years like that of god Brahmā), body (possessing power, beauty etc.) as desired, unparalleled fortune, dominance in the celestial regions, the earth and the nether world, all the mystic powers attained by *yoga*, the three principal objects in human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *Kāma*), and even the absolute (highest) knowledge—all these are attained from you by men, if you are pleased. What to speak of an insignificant blessing like victory over a rival (co-wife and her progeny) ?

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Oh King ! Thus eulogised by Aditi, the lotus-eyed glorious Lord Viṣṇu, who resides in the heart of all created beings spoke to her as follows : Oh scion of the Bharata race !

The glorious Lord replied :

12. Oh mother of gods ! Known to me is your long cherished desire concerning your sons, who have been robbed of their glory and fortune by their enemies, and have been expelled from their homes.

13. You long to stay with your sons who, after, thoroughly vanquishing the vain-glorious mighty Asura chiefs on the battle field, have recovered their fortune and glory.

14. You desire to behold the wives of the enemies approaching the dead bodies of their husbands and bewailing, when they (enemies of your sons) are killed in battle, by your sons, of whom Indra is the eldest.

15. You wish to see that your sons have retrieved all

their glory and fortune and are extremely prosperous, and having re-established themselves in the heavenly regions, are enjoying themselves in sports.

16. Oh goddess ! In my opinion those leaders of Asura forces are, for the most part, now invincible; for they are now protected by favourable time and spiritually powerful Brāhmaṇas (or spiritually powerful Brāhmaṇas are gracious unto them). Application of prowess, (even on my part) will not be conducive to happiness, under these circumstances.

17. In spite of this, Oh noble lady, an expedient (to restore your former glory etc.) must be thought out by me inasmuch as I am gratified by your observance of the (*payovrata*) vow. My propitiation which results in conferment of the desire motivating it, should not prove futile.

18. By the correct observance of the *payovrata* vow, I have been properly worshipped and agreeably praised by you, for the protection of your children. Establishing myself in the austere penance (the procreative energy) of Kaśyapa, the Son of Marīci (your husband), I shall assume your son-hood by a ray of mine, and shall protect your sons.

19. Conceiving in your mind that I, of such (as is at present) form, am abiding in your husband, attend to your husband, the sinless lord of creation, Kaśyapa (and get conceived).

20. This secret should never be divulged to another person under any circumstances, even though you are interrogated. Everything will turn out well, but this secret of gods must be thoroughly guarded, Oh divine lady.

Śrī Śuka said :

21-22. Having addressed (her) thus, the Lord (immediately) disappeared on that very spot. Being bestowed with an extremely rare boon viz. the birth of Lord Hari through her, Aditi, feeling as if her object had been accomplished, betook herself to her husband with great devotion. Kaśyapa verily came to perceive that through his meditational *yoga*.

23. The sage of unfailing insight (knowledge) cognised the penetration of Lord Hari's ray within him. (Though to him both the *devas* and *asuras*, being his sons were equal) he,

with his mind serene and concentrated, deposited in Aditi that semen (charged with Hari's rays and) conserved through a long penance, just as the wind (to which all are equal) places (frictional) fire in the wood.

24. God Brahmā, knowing the presence of that eternal glorious Lord in Aditi's womb, began to praise him, in esoteric terms.

God Brahmā said :

25. Victory to you, Oh glorious Lord who are widely extolled in the Vedas and are of mighty prowess¹ ! My salutation to you, the protector of the Brāhmaṇas (and the Vedas). I bow to you again and again, you, the master of three *guṇas*.

26. I bow to you who were in the womb of Pṛśni (i. e. Pṛśni's son) and are revealed in the Vedas. You are the Maker of all, and contain all three worlds in your navel. You transcend the three worlds and still as *antaryāmin* (in-dwelling-soul) you enter and stay within all living beings and are all-pervading.

27. You who are called the Supreme Person of infinite powers, are the beginning, the end and the middle of the universe. Oh Ruler of the Universe ! Being the Time-Spirit you carry away with you everything in the universe like a deep stream of water sweeping away everything that falls into it.

28. Verily, you are competent to create all beings, mobile or immobile as well as even the Lords of creations. Like a boat unto a person about to drown in water, you are the main supporter of gods (residents of the celestial world) who have fallen from the heaven, Oh Lord !

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Lord incarnates as Vāmana. Visit to Bali's sacrifice

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The Lord whose glorious acts and powers were thus extolled, by god Brahmā and who is above birth and death

1. *Urukrama* : Or in anticipation of the Lord's future feat : Oh Lord of wide strides.

manifested himself through Aditi, in a form endowed with four arms wielding (in each) a conch, a mace, a lotus and a discus, clad in yellow garment and with eyes wide like a lotus.

2. Bright dark-blue in complexion, and with the splendour of his lotus-like face enhanced with the lustre of his alligator-shaped ear-rings, the Supreme Person, with the Śrīvatsa mark on his chest, was adorned with bracelets, armlets, a shining diadem, a girdle and a pair of beautiful anklets.

3. Irradiated with his special splendid *Vanamālā* (wreath of forest flowers) resonant with a swarm of humming bees and with the *Kaustubha* gem suspended from his neck, Lord Hari dispelled with his splendour the gloom in the house of Kāśyapa, the Lord of Creation, with his effulgence.

4. At that time, the cardinal points became clear and bright; lakes and ponds became translucent; all the creatures became jubilant; the seasons exhibited their characteristic efflorescence; joy reigned in the heaven, the mid air, the earth, gods (whose tongue is fire), kine, the three twice-born classes and mountains.

5. On the twelfth day of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada when the moon was within the mansion called *Śravaṇa*, and the auspicious time was the *Abhijit* (the first *arṇha* of *Śravaṇa*), the Lord incarnated (on the earth) and all constellations of stars (e.g. *Aśvinī*), planets etc. (by their auspicious influence) indicated his descent to be beneficial.

6. That twelfth day (of the bright half of Bhādrapada), when the sun attained the meridian, and the birth of Lord Hari took place, is known to people as *Vijayā* (the victorious).

7. Conchs were blown and big drums, kettle-drums, tabors and *paṇavas* (a kind of musical instrument) were sounded. There was the tumultuous sound of various musical instruments.

8. The celestial damsels being highly delighted danced and prominent Gandharvas (like *Hāhā*, *Hūhū*) sang. Sages, gods, Manus, *manes* and fire-gods extolled the Lord.

9-10. Hosts of *Siddhas* and *Vidyādharas*, along with *Kimpuruṣas* and *Kinnaras*, *Cāraṇas*, *Yakṣas* and *rakṣas*, *suparṇas* (eagles), best of serpents, and the attendants of gods sang and

danced. Highly extolling the Lord, they showered flowers on the hermitage of Aditi and its premises.

11. Beholding that Supreme Person as born from her womb, Aditi was astonished and was transported with joy. Amazed at the assumption of a human form by his yogic *Māyā* Power, even Kaśyapa, the Lord of Creation hailed him 'May you be victorious'.

12. With that very form, decorated with ornaments and endowed with weapons which Hari, of unmanifest consciousness, manifested to them, he (instantly) transformed Himself in a dwarf Brāhmaṇa boy like a wonderfully active actor, while the parents were simply looking on.

13. Seeing (the transformation of the Lord as) the dwarf Brāhmaṇa boy, all great sages were delighted and with Kaśyapa, the Lord of creation, as their head, got performed all the religious rites and observances (from those beginning with the birth e. g. *jātakarman* and other).

14*. While his sacred thread ceremony (*Upanayana*) was being performed, the sun-god (the presiding deity of *Gāyatrī Mantra*) taught him the *Gāyatrī Mantra*; Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods, gave him the sacred thread, and Kaśyapa, the cord of *mūñja* grass to be tied round his waist.

15*. The Earth-goddess conferred the skin of black-antelope on him, while Soma, the Lord of plant and herbs offered the sacred staff. The mother covered his nudity with a piece of cloth, and heavens gave an umbrella to the Lord of the Universe.

16*. God Brahmā presented him a water pot (of gourd or wood) and the seven sages, the *darbha* grass. The goddess Sarasvatī gave a rosary of beads to the Immortal Supreme Soul.

17*. When his initiation-ceremony (sacred-thread-inves-

14-17* The list of deities who presented Vāmana different articles differs in other *Purāṇas*. Thus in *Matsya P.* 245-85 we find the black antelope skin given by Brahmā, the sacred thread by Bṛhaspati, the sacred staff by Marici, Kamaṇḍalu by Vasiṣṭha, a bunch of Kuśa grass by Aṅgiras, rosary of beads by Pulaha, a pair of white garments by Pulastya. The four Vedas, Sāṅkhya, Yoga and other Śāstras attended upon Vāmana.

titure ceremony) was over, Kubera, King of Yakṣas gave him a begging-bowl with words "This is for him". And the veritable Mother-goddess Satī (Umā) herself served him the alms.

18. Thus honoured by all, the newly initiated eminent Brāhmaṇa boy, with his splendid Brahmanic (divine) effulgence, surpassed the whole assembly of Brāhmaṇa-sages.

19. The twice-born boy instituted the sacred fire (on the altar) enkindling it, duly worshipping it by placing the *Kuśa* grass around it in their proper places (*paristīrya*), and oblated into the fire the sacred sticks (daubed with ghee—the *samidhs*).

20. Having learnt that Bali, of enormous wealth and power, was engaged as a sacrificer in a horse-sacrifice conducted by the Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgu clan, he (Vāmana) concentrating in himself all the power, proceeded (from the hermitage of Aditi) to that place (of Bali's sacrificial hall), bending down the earth at every step, on account of his weight.

21. The sacrificial priests of the Bhṛgu clan who were conducting the best of sacrifices (viz. a horse-sacrifice) of Bali on the northern bank of the Narmadā, at a spot called *Bhṛgu-Kacchaka* (near modern Broach in Gujarat), beheld him (Vāmana) approaching them, brilliant like the sun risen just near them.

22. Oh King, their glory being eclipsed by the effulgence of Vāmana, the priests conducting the sacrifice, the sacrificer Bali and the members of the sacrificial assembly began to conjecture (among themselves) whether he (Vāmana) was the Sun-god himself or was the Fire-god or the (great) sage Sanatkumāra himself, coming with a view to observe the sacrifice.

23. While the Bhṛgus along with their disciples were thus variously expressing their surmise about him, Lord Vāmana carrying with him his umbrella, sacred staff, and water-bowl full of water, entered the pandal of the horse-sacrifice.

24-25. Noticing the entry of Lord Hari, a dwarfish Brāhmaṇa boy with the (outward) appearance of a *Brahmacā-*

rin assumed with his *Māyā* powers, having the zone of *Muñja*-grass tied round his waist, and wearing as an upper garment a deer-skin in the fashion of the sacred thread (over his shoulder) and matted hair, the Bhṛguś along with their disciples and fires (fire-gods) as well, shrank before his divine lustre, and standing up to honour him, accorded unto him reception with all the due formalities.

26. Overjoyed to see his charming personality worth seeing, with limbs proportionate to his form, the sacrificer himself offered him a suitable seat.

27. According him courteous welcome, Bali washed the feet of the Lord, and worshipped him who is attractive to the minds of those who have abjured all attachment.

28. Bali, the knower of the path of righteousness, placed (sprinkled) on his head the water with which he washed his feet, and hence had become most auspicious and capable of removing all the sins of the people, and which Lord Śiva (the Lord of mount *Kailāśa*) the god of gods and the wearer of the crescent of the moon on his forehead, received on his head with utmost devotion.

Bali said :

29. (Hearty) welcome to you. I pay my obeisance to you. Oh Brahman ! (Be pleased to tell us) what we should do for you. Oh noble Sir, I deem that you are the very embodiment of the penance of all Brāhmaṇa sages.

30. (Fully) satisfied are all our fore-fathers today. Our family and house have been purified. This very sacrifice has been successfully performed inasmuch as your worship has visited our house.

31. The sacrificial fires of mine whose sins have been completely annihilated by the waters used for washing your feet, stand properly worshipped with oblations, according to sacriptural injunctions. This land of our has been purified by your tiny feet, Oh son of a Brāhmaṇa !

32. Oh son of a Brāhmaṇa ! Methinks you have come to seek something. Be pleased to accept from me whatever you desire, Oh Brahmacārin ! Oh most worshipful Brāhmaṇa !

Duly accept from me either the earth, gold, a well-furnished house, delicious food and drink or possibly even a girl or prosperous villages, horses, elephants or chariots, Oh Brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Vāmana's request for three paces of Land—Śukra's opposition

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Hearing the above-mentioned speech of Bali, the son of Virocana, which was in accordance with the prescribed path of righteousness, pleasing yet true, the glorious Lord was pleased with him. Welcoming him, He spoke.

The glorious Lord said:

2. Oh Lord of men ! This speech of yours is courteous, true, worthy of your family (traditions), full of righteousness contributory to your glory, as the descendants of Bhṛgu race are your guides in matters temporal, while in matters spiritual your quiescent grand-father, the eldest member of the family (viz. Prahlāda) is your authority.

3. No such niggardly person was born in this family who ever refused to donate (anything) to Brāhmaṇas or was so miserly as going back upon his promise to give.

4. Never there was any such coward king in your family who at the time of religious donations turned this face against persons who, deserving the gift, had requested for it, or who, at the time of battle, showed their backs to worthy foes who challenged them in fight. In your family, Prahlāda shines forth in his unsullied faultless glory like the moon in the firmament.

5. In this family was born Hiranyākṣa who, armed with his mace, travelled alone over this earth for the conquest of all directions i.e. of (the entire earth) and did not meet any rival (equal to him in valour).

6. When faced by him (Hiranyākṣa), at the time of lifting up of the earth (from the *rasātala*), Viṣṇu (in the Boar-

incarnation) vanquished him with great difficulty, but frequently remembering his great bravery, did not regard himself as the victor (subsequently).

7. Hearing the report of his (Hiraṇyākṣa's) death, his brother Hiraṇyakaśipu got enraged and went, of yore, to the region of Hari, for killing¹ the slayer of his brother.

8. Beholding him (Hiraṇyakaśipu) rushing toward himself with a spear in hand, like the god of death, Viṣṇu, who knows the (suitability of) Time, and is the foremost one among the masters of marvellous illusive powers², pondered over the matter.

9. 'Wherever I go, he will certainly follow me as the (god of) death does unto living beings. I shall, therefore, enter his heart, inasmuch as his vision is confined to external things (or affairs)'.

10. Taking this decision, Viṣṇu, with a disturbed mind (as a matter of fact, with a calm and undisturbed mind) concealed his subtle body in the breath of the enemy who was rushing at him, and entered his body through his nostrils (without being known by him), Oh ruler of Asuras !

11. Having ransacked his vacant residence and not being able to find him, the warrior³ got enraged and roared loudly. He searched for Viṣṇu, the heaven and the earth, the cardinal points and the sky, the subterranean regions and the seas, but could not find him anywhere.

12. As he did not perceive him, he said positively, "The whole of the universe has been closely searched by me. The murderer of my brother must have certainly gone to the place (viz. the region of death) from which no man returns (he being ever liberated from Saṁsāra must have returned to his original nature which is *brahma-hood*).

13. In this world, the persistence in enmity continues only so far i.e. to the extent of, the death of, the (inimical) embodied beings. Anger (the cause of enmity) which is engendered through ignorance is fostered by egotism.

1. As a matter of fact for knowing Him (GS).

2. *māyāvīṇāśaśaśa*—The bestower of boons like liberation from saṁsāra.—VJ.

3. *Vīra*—One devoid of knowledge (*vigalam irāś jñānaśaśaśa*)—VD.

14. Your father Virocana, the son of Prahlāda was so devoted to Brāhmaṇas that when so requested by celestials in the disguise of twice-born ones (Brāhmaṇas), knew their real nature (as enemies), and still conferred his lease of life upon them.

15. Your worship resorted to the righteous course of conduct followed by householders, Brāhmaṇas, your valorous forefathers and others of wide reputation.

16. Oh Lord of Daityas ! You are the foremost one among the bestowers of boons. From you, I seek a small piece of land three paces in length measured with my feet.¹

17. Even though you are a liberal Lord of the earth, I do not seek anything else from you, Oh king ! For a learned person who accepts a gift just limited to his (actual) requirements, does not contaminate any sin.

Bali said :

18. Oh Brāhmaṇa's son ! Your words are commendable in the case of the aged. You are, however, a child, of childlike (undeveloped) intelligence², as such, you do not know your self-interest.

19. Having propitiated me, the sole supreme ruler of the world, with courteous words, you seek only three paces (feet) of land, out of lack of intelligence³ or knowledge, when I am capable of gifting a continent.

20. A person who approaches me (for a gift) should not (have the occasion or need to) approach another for begging. Hence, Oh Brāhmaṇa boy ! Accept from me freely, at will⁴ as much land as is sufficient for you to maintain your livelihood (decently).

1. This motif of the Vāmana story is traceable to the Vedic symbolism of Viṣṇu measuring out three *lokas* in three strides. Vide RV 1.22.17 also 1.154.2, 1.155.4. Vāmana is the unmanifest principle, while Viṣṇu or Virāṭ is manifest.

2. ŚR states that as a matter of fact the 2nd line should read : *tvam bālo'bālīśa-matīḥ* "You are a-bālīśa—whose intelligence is fully developed and as such you consider the interests of your devotees and seek no personal interest." (As you are perfect there is no scope for any personal want).

3. ŚR. : the words in the 2nd line *yo'buddhimān* should be split as '*yo Buddhimān*, "Intelligent as you are" etc.

4. *Kāmaṁ*—By stretching your stride as much as possible—ŚR. Vāmana complies.

The Lord replied :

21. All the desired-most objects (or lands) that are available in the three worlds cannot be enough to satisfy a person who has not subdued his senses or the mind, Oh King !

22. He who is dissatisfied with three feet of land, cannot have his desire fulfilled with an island—continent consisting of nine *Varṣas* (sub-continents), as he will crave to possess all the seven island-continents.

23. We heard the report that Pṛthu, the son of Vena¹, Gaya² and other kings who were the Lords of the seven continents (*dvīpas*) never reached the end of their thirst for more, despite their possession of the hoards of wealth and desired objects.

24. A contented person leads a happy life with whatever comes to his lot by chance, while a discontented person who has no control over himself, is never satisfied even if the three worlds be possessed by him.

25. It is said that non-contentment with reference to wealth and objects of enjoyment, is the cause of the transmigration of man in this world, and that contentment with what one happens to get by (one's predestined) luck, is the way to emancipation (from *saṁsāra*).

26. The spiritual glory of a Brāhmaṇa who is satisfied with what he obtains through chance, enhances. It, however, is extinguished through lack of contentment, like fire with water.

27. Prominent among the bestowers of boons as you are, I, hence, seek only three feet of land from you. I shall have my purpose (of depriving you of everything) accomplished

1. *Vaiṇya*—Pṛthu, son of Vena. He was churned out of the hand of the dead body of Vena. He "milked" the earth of food-stuffs. His reign was a golden period. He performed a horse-sacrifice. Installing his son Vijitāśva on the throne, Pṛthu retired to forest and performed penance and merged in *parabrahman*.

—*Mbh. Śānti* 59.98-128; 227. 49-56.

VP. 1.22, *The Bh. P. Supra. 4th skandha.*

2. *Gaya*—An ancient king-sage (*rājarsi*) who performed many sacrifices (*Mbh. vana* 75,18). He gifted away all land to Brāhmaṇas (*Mbh. Śānti* 234.25). He earned reputation and wealth by visiting sacred places and temples in India. (*Mbh. Vana.* 94.18).

with that much only. For the desirability of wealth is limited to the extent of its usefulness.

Śrī Śuka said :

28. When addressed thus, Bali laughingly spoke, "Take it as much as desired". He then took in his hand his jar of water to donate the land (with due religious formalities) to Vāmana.

29. Śukra, the foremost among the knowers (of politics) apprehending the (inner) design of Viṣṇu, forewarned his disciple who was about to gift the land to Viṣṇu.

Śukra said :

30. Oh son of Virocana ! This dwarf is no other than the eternal divine Lord Viṣṇu who is born of Kaśyapa and Aditi, with the object of accomplishing the purpose of gods.

31. I do not approve of the promise given by you without foreseeing the consequent calamities (implicit in your promise). A great disaster has befallen the Daityas.

32. This Hari who has assumed the form of a *Brahmacārin* through his delusive powers (*māyā*) will dispossess you of your position, sovereignty, fortune, splendour, world-wide reputation and learning and pass it on to Indra.

33. Assuming his cosmic form, co-extensive with the universe, he will occupy all these (three) regions with three steps. Having conferred everything that you own, upon Viṣṇu, how are you going to exist, oh fool !

34. Where is the space left for the third foot when the all-pervading Viṣṇu covers the whole of the earth in one foot, and the heaven with another, and occupies the intervening space by his body ? (Thus you cannot fulfil your promise.)

35. Me-thinks your permanent place lies in the hell, the destination of those who do not redeem their pledge, since even you will not be able to fulfil your promise.

36. They (i.e. the wise) do not commend that gift as good if it endangers the means of livelihood of the donor. For in this world, charitable gifts, performance of sacrifices, austere penances and religious acts can be performed by persons with means of subsistence.

37. A person who divides his wealth in five shares (and invests it) for the purpose of religious acts, glory, getting economic return, personal pleasure and provision of one's relatives, becomes happy here and hereafter.

38. If you feel uneasy about the break of promise hear from me, Oh best of the Asuras ! the decision of the seers of the *Rgveda* on this point (about truth and falsehood). Whatever is promised by uttering the sacred syllable *Om*, is the truth and whatever is denied by expressing a 'No' is untruth.

39. It is sung (in the *Śruti* texts) that one should know that truth is the flower and fruit of the tree of this body. When the tree does not survive that (viz. the fruits and flowers i.e. the truth) ceases to be. Hence, *anṛta* (viz. not giving away all one's possessions) is the root-mainstay of the body.

40. Just as a tree that is uprooted, dries up and dies in a short time, so does the body which has lost its support of *anṛta*, undoubtedly dry up soon.

41. The Vedic text *parāḡ riktam* etc. means that which is expressed by the assenting syllable *Om* carries away wealth to a long distance, and leaves one incomplete (bereft of wealth).

A person verily becomes poorer to that extent to which he agrees to give by uttering the syllable *Om* (yes). A donor who agrees to give everything to the mendicant cannot find sufficient for his personal enjoyment (subsistence).

42. Therefore, the term 'No' which is regarded as *anṛta* means fullness to oneself (as his wealth is unspent), and adds to his wealth (as due to the consciousness of his deficiency, he tries to get more wealth from others). But if a person who makes a false statement all the while by saying 'No' (refusing to give), gets a bad name, and is as good as dead though breathing.

43. False statements are not condemnable when made to women (while courting), in jokes, in arranging marriages, for obtaining one's livelihood, for saving one's own life in danger, in protecting cows and Brāhmaṇas and where violence (to another) is anticipated.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Manifestation of the Cosmic Form by Viṣṇu

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Bali, the Lord of the household, who was thus addressed by his family-preceptor, remained silent for a moment and (weighing the consequences) with careful mind, he submitted as follows :

Bali said :

2. What has been stated by your worship, is true. It is the duty of householders to see that the wealth, enjoyment (of life) good reputation and the means of livelihood are not adversely affected by anything.

3. Having promised the Brāhmaṇa once that I shall give, how can I, the descendant of Prahlāda, out of greed for wealth, refuse, like a gambler, to give.

4. The earth has verily said : There is no greater heinous unrighteousness than falsehood. I am capable of bearing anything else except a man given to uttering falsehood.

5. I am not so much afraid of the (tortures of) hell, poverty, ocean of misery, displacement from (my present) status and even death, as I am of cheating a Brāhmaṇa.

6. In this world, wealth (and as a matter of fact) everything else abandons a dying man. (Why should not one give it away while alive ? If only a part is given and the recipient Brāhmaṇa is not satisfied, the gift becomes fruitless). What is the propriety of that charitable act unless the recipient Brāhmaṇa is satisfied thereby ?

7. Righteous souls like sage Dadhyañc¹, king Śibi² and others accomplish the well-being of creatures by sacrificing their lives which are so difficult to give up; what consideration is there for the earth and other things (which are less important than life) ?

1. A famous sage, Son of Bhṛgu—Handed over his body to gods for preparation of *Vajra* (the weapon of Indra) out of his bones,—*Mbh. Vana* 190.21 *Śalya* 51.29-32.

2. An ancient royal sage who submitted his body to a hawk (Indra) to save a dove (fire-god)—*Mbh. Vana* 197. 21.28.

8. Time has swallowed up the enjoyment of the earth and the position in the next world of the kings of Daityas who (while alive) enjoyed the earth and were ever successful in war. But (it could) not do so to the glorious renown achieved by them on the earth, Oh Brāhmaṇa.

9. Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ! Those who lay down their lives without retreating from the battlefield are easily available, but not so the donors who, when approached by worthy recipients, reverentially give away their wealth.

10. Poverty and affliction in consequence of satisfying the desires of (ordinary) supplicants, appear graceful to a magnanimous and merciful soul. Need it be said that it is much more so in cases like yours who know the *Brahman* or Vedas ? Hence, I shall bestow upon the *Brahmacārin* what he wants.

11. Let him be Viṣṇu, the bestower of boons whom your worshipful self, conversant with the procedure laid down in the Vedas, so reverentially worship by performance of various kinds of sacrifices (with *Soma* or without *Soma*) or let him be an enemy. I shall confer upon him the land desired for by him, Oh sage !

12. Even if he unrighteously binds me down—an innocent sinless person, I shall do no harm unto him, a cowardly enemy disguised as a Brāhmaṇa.

13. If he be really Viṣṇu of hallowed renown he would not forfeit his fame (by deceiving me thus). He will take away the land by killing me on the battlefield or lie down killed by me.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. The preceptor Śukra, being impelled by Providence, pronounced the following curse upon his noble-minded disciple who placed no faith in his words, and would not abide by his command, but wanted to be true to his promise.

15. “You who are highly conceited as being learned and obstinate. and show disregard to us by transgressing our orders, shall, in no time, fall down from your royal splendour”.

16. Though cursed thus by his preceptor, the great Bali did not swerve from the truth and worshipping Vāmana,

he gave away the land with due formality of pouring water (from his right palm in solemn confirmation of the gift).

17. The royal consort Vindhyāvalī, adorned with a costly pearl necklace, came there and brought a gold jar full of water to wash Vāmana's feet.

18. The sacrificer himself gladly washed the glorious feet of the Lord, and sprinkled on his head, the waters which are capable of sanctifying the whole of the universe.

19. In the heaven, all the hosts of gods, Gandharvas, Vidyādhara, Cāraṇas applauded that act of worship, and extolled the Asura King and his straightforwardness and overcome with joy, showered flowers over him.

20. Thousands of kettledrums were sounded; Gandharvas and Kimpuruṣas sang that a most difficult act has been done by this noble-minded Bali, in that, he knowingly bestowed the (sovereignty of the) three worlds upon his enemies.

21. That dwarf form of that infinite Hari, comprising as it is of three *guṇas*, miraculously expanded to such an extent as to include that earth, the heaven, the cardinal points, the space between the heaven and the earth, cavities and hells, oceans, the sub-human beings, human beings, gods and sages and everything else.

22. Bali along with the sacrificial priests, the president of the sacrificial assembly, and its members, saw on the body of the Great Spirit comprising of all the *guṇas*, the whole of the universe made up of three *guṇas*, and consisting of elements, the senses with their objects (of enjoyment), the mind and the *jīvas* (individual souls).

23. Bali whose army was like that of Indra espied on the cosmic form of the Lord the *rasātala* (the sub-terranean regions) at the sole of his feet, the earth resting on his feet, mountains on the shanks, birds on his knee-joints, the group of wind-gods (*maruts*) on the thighs of the Supreme Person.

24. He beheld the two twilights (deities presiding over the dawn and the dusk) on the garments of the all-pervading Lord, the lords of creation in his genital organ, *Asuras* of which he was the chief in the anus, the firmament in the navel, the

seven seas in his sides, and the string of constellations on the chest of the Lord of very colossal strides.

25-26. Oh Child ! He saw (the presiding deity of *Dharma* in the heart of the slayer of Mura (*Viṣṇu*), *Rta* (Divine Law) and *Satya* (Truth) on his breasts, the Moon-god in the mind, the goddess *Śrī* with a lotus in her hand resting on his bosom, and all the *Sāma*-hymns, articulate sounds in his throat, all the celestials with Indra as their chief on his arms, the cardinal points in his ears, and the heaven on (the crown of) his head, the clouds in the mass of his hair, the vital breath in his nostrils, the Sun-god in his eyes, and the Fire-god in his mouth.

27. He saw the Vedas in his speech, Varuṇa the Lord of waters in his palate, the interdicting and prescriptive parts (of the scriptures) in his eye-brows, the day and night on his eyelashes, Anger on his forehead, greed on the lower lip of the Supreme Person.

28. Oh King ! He saw the passion of Love in his sense of touch, water in his semen, *Adharma* (the spirit of unrighteousness) on his back, sacrificial activity in his steps, Death in his shadow, *Māyā* in his laughter, and various species of herbs in the hair on his body.

29. The warrior Bali beheld the rivers in his arteries, rocks in the nails, god Brahmā in his *Buddhi* (intellect), the hosts of gods and sages in his vital breaths, all creatures mobile and immobile on his person.

30. Perceiving all this universe resting in the Person of the Lord, all the Asuras lost their consciousness, Oh child !

The *Sudarśana* discus of unbearable velocity, force and effulgence, the *Śārṅga* bow twanging like rumbling clouds.

31. The *Pāñcajanya* conch of deep sound like the roar of thunder, the mighty mace of Viṣṇu called *Kaumodakī*, the sword called *Vidyādhara* (otherwise known as Nandaka) paired with a shield called *Śatacandra* (as it was set with hundred moonlike studs), and the two excellent quivers with inexhaustible stock of arrows, (all in personem).

32. His chief attendants headed by Sunanda, accompanied by the guardians of the worlds, waited upon the Lord. Adorned with shining diadem, armlets, a pair of alligator-

shaped ear-rings, the *Śrī-Vatsa* mark, in foremost of all jewels *Kaustubha*, girdle, clad in yellow silk garment.

33. Adorned with the *Vanamālā* (a wreath of forest-flowers) hovered round by bees, the Divine Lord of mighty strides, shone in great brilliance.

Oh King ! He covered the earth of Bali with one foot ; He occupied the sky with his body and the quarters with his arms.

34. As he covered the celestial region with another step there was not the slightest space left for the third as the second step of the Lord of wide strides extended higher and higher beyond *Maharloka*, *Janaloka*, *Tapoloka* upto *Satyaloka*—the region of god *Brahmā*.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Bali Bound Down

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On beholding that the foot of the Lord had reached (his region) *satya-loka* and finding himself enveloped in and the effulgence of his region eclipsed by the brilliant lustre of his moon-like (toe-) nails, lotus-born god *Brahmā* and also great sages like *Marīci*, sages of great vows (of life-long celibacy like *Nārada*) and *yogins* (of the path of knowledge) like *Sanandana*, came forth to receive him.

2. (The presiding deities of) the Vedas and the subsidiary Vedas (viz. *āyur-veda* the science of medicine, *Dhanur-veda* the military science, *Gāndharva veda* the science of music, *Sthāpatya veda* the science of Engineering), *Niyamas* and *yamas*¹, science of Logic (*Sāṅkhya* and *Mīmāṃsā*), History (viz. the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*), six auxiliaries of Vedas,²

1. Vide *Supra Bh. P.* 4.22.24.

2. viz. (1) *Śikṣā*—phonetics or Science of proper articulation and pronunciation (2) *Chandas*—science of Prosody, (3) *Vyākaraṇa*—Grammar, (4) *Nirukta*—Etymology of Vedic words, (5) *Jyotiṣa*—Astronomy, (6) *Kalpa*—code of rituals.

Purāṇas and *Samhitās* (sacred texts like *Pāñcarātra Samhitā*, *Brahma-samhitā*, *Garga-samhitā* and others) who had burnt down their impurities of sins by the fire of spiritual knowledge enkindled by the wind of *Yoga*, approached and bowed down at the foot of the Lord, by virtue of meditating which they would attain to the region of god Brahmā which is not accessible by the path of *Karmas* (religious, ritualistic acts).

3. Thereupon, the lotus-born god Brahmā, of extremely pure reputation, brought water to worship Viṣṇu's foot raised upto his region. Devoutly worshipping his feet, he sang out his praise, for he himself was born out of the lotus that adorns his navel.

4. The water that was poured out of the *Kamaṇḍalu* (water-jug) of god Brahmā, for washing the feet of the Lord of mighty strides, and being purified thereby, became the heavenly river in the sky. Like the pure hallowing renown of the Lord, it sanctifies the three worlds as it falls from the sky, and flows through them from the heavens.

5. God Brahmā and other protectors of the worlds, along with their followers, reverentially brought articles of worship to their Lord who had withdrawn his all-pervading form in a limited personality (viz. that of Vāmana).

6. With water brought for worship, with garlands of flowers and divinely fragrant sandal-paste and pigment, with burning of fragrant incense and lights, parched grains of paddy, unbroken rice, fruits and sprouts.

7. With songs of praise, shouts of victory announcing his prowess and greatness, with dancing performances, playing of musical instruments and presentation of vocal music and sounds of conchs and kettle drums.

8. Jāmbavān, the king of bears, with the speed of the mind, proclaimed with beating of drums in all directions, the victory of the Lord and the great festive occasion.

9. Finding that under a deceitful pretext of a request of three feet of land, the entire earth was taken away (fraudulently) from their master who was engaged in a sacrifice, the *Asuras* flared up and said to each other.

10. "Certainly this is not even a *Brāhmaṇa* by mere caste, (even a lowly *Brāhmaṇa* will not commit such a fraud).

He is Viṣṇu, the prominent one among the masters of illusive powers (and conjuring tricks). Disguising himself as a Brāhmaṇa, he desires to accomplish the objective of gods.

11. We stand cheated of everything by this enemy who assuming the disguise of a *Brahmacārin* came for begging, while our master has laid down his powers of punishment during the period of this sacrifice.

12. Being a person vowed to observe (perpetual) truthfulness, and especially when consecrated for performing sacrifice, it is not possible to utter falsehood for our master who is friendly to Brāhmaṇas full of compassion.

13. It is, therefore, our sacred duty to kill him (Vāmana) and serve the cause of our master." Saying thus the followers of Bali, Asuras, took up their arms.

14. Thus being enraged, all of them, armed with spears (*śūla*) and sharp-edged steel-bars¹ (*paṭṭiśa*) rushed to strike at Vāmana (the Dwarf), even though Bali did not wish it.

15. Seeing the generals of the Daitya army attacking Vāmana, Viṣṇu's attendants laughed at them, and thwarted them (Asuras' attack) with their arms uplifted.

16-17. Nanda, Sunanda, Jaya, Vijaya, Prabala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudākṣa, Viśvaksena, the king of birds—Garuḍa, Śrutadeva, Puṣpadanta and Sātvata—each of them possessing the strength of ten thousand elephants, advanced to kill the Asura army.

18. Seeing his people being massacred by the followers of Viṣṇu, and remembering the curse of Śukra (his preceptor), Bali prevented them from fighting, although they were enraged.

19. "Oh Vipracitti ! Oh Rāhu ! Oh Nemi ! Listen to my speech ! Please do not fight; retreat. This period is not favourable unto us.

20. Oh Daitya comrades ! No human being is powerful enough to overcome Him with human prowess, as he is the master (chief cause) who distributes pleasure and pain to all creatures.

1. *paṭṭiśa lohadaṇḍo yas tikṣṇadhāraḥ kṣuropamaḥ*—*Vaijayanti* quoted in ASD p. 310.

21. The glorious Lord who was formerly in favour of our prosperity and against that of the celestials, is today disposed to do quite the reverse of it.

22. No person can verily overcome the Time-spirit by physical power, expert advisers, intelligence, fortresses, mystic formulae, medicine etc. and by expedients like *sāma*, *dāna*, *daṇḍa* and *bheda*).

23. These attendants of Hari have many times been vanquished by you, when Fortune was favourable to you. Today those very attendants are roaring after vanquishing you in the battle.

24. If the Providence becomes favourable (again), we shall again defeat them. Therefore wait for the favourable Time, which will turn to be advantageous to us."

Śrī Śuka said :

25. Hearing the directive (speech) of their leader, the generals of the Daitya and Dānava forces, beaten by the attendants of Viṣṇu entered the *Rasātala* (nether world).

26. On the very day of extracting Soma juice in the sacrifice, Garuḍa, king of birds, the son of Tārṅṣya, informed of the desire of the Lord¹, bound down Bali with the noosecords of Varuṇa.

27. When the king of Asuras was thus being taken prisoner by Viṣṇu of superior power, there arose a loud outcry on earth, in the sky and in all directions.

28. Glorious Lord Vāmana addressed to Bali who, though bound down by the noose of Varuṇa and bereft of royal splendour, was of balanced and stable mind, and of noble reputation, Oh King !

29. "Oh Asura ! you have given me three paces of land. The entire earth (world) has been covered by two steps, Please provide space for the third.

1. ŚR explains : The Lord wanted to shower grace on Bali by depriving him of all his property and freeing him from his egoistic claim on his body. Or the Lord wanted to lower Bali's position to exhibit Bali's greatness etc.

30. As this entire land as far as the sun warms it by its rays, and the moon and the stars illuminate it, and as far as the rain-god was sending showers of water, was yours.

31. With one step I have covered the region of the earth, the sky and the quarters by my body, the celestial regions were covered by the second step as witnessed by you.

32. If you are not able to give what is promised, it is inevitable that your stay should be in the hell. Hence, you do enter the hell as approved of by your spiritual preceptor.

33. All the aspirations of that person fail. The celestial region is far away (from him). He falls down into hell who deceives a person seeking his help, by failing to give what is promised.

34. Proud of your riches as you were, you deceived me with the words "I shall give you" (three paces of land). Suffer, therefore, for some years in hell as a punishment for uttering falsehood."

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

A Dialogue between Bali and Vāmana

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh King ! Even though Bali was thus (humiliatingly) insulted by the glorious Lord and though he was made to swerve from the truth, Bali remained firm in mind, and gave this dignified reply.

Bali submitted :

2. Oh god of excellent renown ! Your worship regards the promise given by me as false. (It is you who fraudulently disguised yourself as a dwarf at the time of begging, and deceitfully manifested a different form at the time of the implementation of promise). In spite of this, I shall be true to my word so that I should not be regarded as a cheat. Be pleased to place your third step on my head (as the possessor

of wealth is more valuable than the wealth possessed) Oh Prominent one among gods !

3. Displaced as I am from my (sovereign) position, I am not so much afraid of hell or of being bound down with (Varuṇa's) noose, or of insuperable calamities or of financial difficulties or of any punishment from you as from ignoble reputation (viz. Bali was a deceitful person).

4. Methinks punishment meted out by the worthiest person is the most praiseworthy reward to men, as neither mother nor father nor brother or friends can deal such punishment.

5. In the guise of an enemy, you are certainly the highest preceptor (and hence benefactor) of us, the Asuras, inasmuch as you gave an insight in this fall to us, who were blinded by pride and arrogance caused by different factors (such as valour, wealth etc.)

6. As it is wellknown, many Asuras, by cherishing deep rooted enmity to You attained to that high position (emancipation from *Samsāra*) which only *yogins* with unserving devotion can reach.

7. Hence, I feel neither much ashamed nor afflicted that I have been taken prisoner and have been bound down with the noose of Varuṇa, by your worship of miraculous feats.

8. My grand-father, Prahlāda who is highly esteemed by your devotees, and whose excellent reputation of saintliness is manifest, was subjected to various cruel tortures by his own father Hiraṇyakaśipu, because he was your enemy.

9. What is the use of the body which abandons one ultimately (at the time of death) ? Of what worth are the robbers, designated as one's own people (e.g. sons, kith and kin), who take away our property ? Of what purpose is the wife who is the cause of transmigration in the *Samsāra* ? What is the use of houses to a mortal ? It is sheer waste of life here.

10. Having come to this definite decision, my eminent grand-father (Prahlāda) of unfathomable wisdom, and the prominent-most saintly person, disturbed by the company of worldly people, resorted to your lotus-like feet which are eternal and which offer immunity from fear (from any quarter), even though you were the destroyer of his relatives and partisans.

11. It is through sheer good luck that I too am brought to the presence of Yourself—You who are the destroyer of both subtle and gross bodies (of beings and thus grant liberation) and that I am forcibly made to give up my wealth (and glorious position). And it is wealth (and position) that deprives man of his judgement and makes him incapable of understanding the uncertainty of life, due to its being within clutches of death.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. While he (Bali) was addressing thus, Prahlāda, beloved of the glorious Lord, appeared (on the scene) like the full moon above the horizon, Oh foremost of Kurus !

13. Bali, having an army like that of Indra, noticed his grand-father, of majestic stature, charming appearance, with eyes large like (a pair of) lotuses, with long arms (reaching his knees), clad in yellow silken garments, bright dark in complexion yet radiant in his native effulgence.

14. Bali, being bound down with the noose of Varuṇa could not offer him worshipful reception as before. He reverentially bowed him with his head, and with his eyes full of tears, he hung his head with shame¹ (as he remembered his egoistic actions).

15. Seeing the Protector of righteous persons sitting there, and being attended upon by his followers like Sunanda, Nanda and others, the noble-minded Prahlāda approached him and paid obeisance to him, placing his head down on the ground, while his eyes were over-whelmed with tears, and hair stood on their ends (through ecstasy).

Prahlāda said :

16. It is fortunate (and not derogatory) that the exalted position of Indra that you yourself bestowed on Bali has been retaken from him by you. I consider that great divine grace has been shown unto him (Bali) in that he has been relieved of his fortune which infatuates the mind and bewilders the soul.

1. GS attributes this to Bali's sense of guilt for forgetting the teaching of Prahlāda about humility and his disparaging remarks to Vāmana.

17. By wealth, even a self-controlled learned person gets deluded (and forgets the essential nature of the soul, even though known previously). How can an ordinary person comprehend properly the course leading to the realization of the soul, when possessed of wealth? Hence I offer my obeisance to you (who have rendered a gracious obligation on Bali by divesting him of his wealth and glory), Oh Nārāyaṇa, the controller of the Universe and witness unto all the worlds.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. It was in the very presence of Prahlāda who stood with folded palms that god Brahmā (who emerged from the golden egg) addressed Viṣṇu, the slayer of demon Madhu, Oh King !

19. Seeing her husband so bound down, Bali's saintly wife (Vindhyāvalī), was overwhelmed with fear. With folded palms, she bowed down to Vāmana (the younger brother of Indra), and with face drooping down in supplication burst forth in appeal (And god Brahmā respected her by giving her the priority in communicating with the Lord).

Vindhyāvalī appealed :

20. You have created these three worlds (the earth, the heaven and the subterranean region) for your own divine sport. But other persons of perverted mentality arrogate proprietary rights over it (as did Bali when he says that he has donated the three worlds as a gift and shall redeem his pledge by offering his head for the third step when as a matter of fact, he is not the master of his body, much less of the universe). You are the creator, protector and destroyer of the universe. To such as you are, what these shameless persons in whom the sense of being independent agents has been implanted by you (through your Māyā), are capable of offering? Oh Lord ! Be pleased to be gracious unto dull-witted Bali and setting him free from bonds, protect him.

God Brahmā said :

21. Oh Creator of living beings ! Oh Controller of all creatures ! Oh God of gods immanent in the Universe ! Be

pleased to release Bali, as he is deprived of everything and he does not deserve confinement.

22. He has gifted to you the entire earth and the higher worlds that he acquired through his pious actions. Everything owned by him including his body has been donated by him to you, without the least flinching of the mind.

23. If a person with sincere and guileless mind, offers water for washing your feet and worships them devoutly with (simple) *dūrvā* (Panic) grass he attains to the highest place (Liberation from *samsāra* or a place in your region, Vaikuṇṭha). Then why does Bali who has gifted to you the three worlds gleefully without the least hesitation, should suffer this calamity ?

The Lord replied :

24. Oh Brahman ! I take away the wealth (fortune etc.) of a person to whom I show my Grace. For being infatuated with wealth and power, a person becomes bereft of humility and shows disrespect to the world and (even) to me.

25. It is only by a lucky chance that the individual Soul, not being his own master and passing through various species of existence according to the fruits of his action, happens to be born as a human being.

26. It should be regarded as my Grace in that particular respect, if he, in the human stage of life, is not affected by pride for his lineage, achievements, youth, beauty, learning, authority, affluence and such other circumstances (and I am not constrained to deprive them of wealth etc.).

27. My devotee should not get infatuated with pride and feel lack of humility due to high birth etc. which are obstructive to the attainment of final bliss.

28. This Bali, the leader of Dānavas and Daityas and capable of enhancing their glory, has vanquished the unconquerable *Māyā* (deluding power of the Lord) and hence, he is not infatuated even in distress.

29-30. He has been deprived of his wealth, dislodged from his sovereign position, insulted, reproached and fettered by his enemies, abandoned by his kith and kin, and subjected to torture, remonstrated and cursed by his spiritual preceptor,

but he remained firm in his vow, and did not deviate from the truth. True to his word as he is, he did not swerve from the truth, despite my misleading him by specious arguments about *Dharma* (righteousness).

31. A position very difficult even for immortal celestials to attain, has been conferred upon him by me. (But as he desired Indra-hood) he will be the Indra under my protection in the period (*Manvantara*) presided over by the Manu Sāvarṇi (after which he will attain that position).

32. Till then, let him live (as a ruler) in *Sutala* which is constructed (more beautifully than the celestial region) by Viśvakarman (the architect of gods). There, under my gracious surveillance, the residents are not subjected to anxieties, diseases, fatigue, laziness, defeat (from internal or external enemies) or other troubles.

33. Your Majesty Indrasena (Bali) ! May good betide you ! Accompanied by your relatives and kinsmen, proceed to *Sutala*—a region worthy of being aspired after even by celestial beings.

34. Even the *Lokapālas* (Protectors of the worlds) shall not (be able to) vanquish you. What of others ? My discus (*Sudarśana*) will put an end to the Daityas who will (dare to) transgress your commands.

35. I shall protect you along with your followers, retinue and property, in every respect. You will always find me present there, Oḥ great warrior !

36. If any demoniac ideas occur to you due to the company of Dānavas and Daityas, they shall immediately disappear at the sight of my glory and prowess.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Bali, free from bonds, enters Sutala

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The magnanimous Bali who was highly respected by all righteous persons, joined his palms, and with his eyes flowing with tears and throat choked with emotion, submitted in falter-

ing accents to Lord Viṣṇu, the ancientmost person who addressed him (as reported in the previous chapter).

Bali said :

2*. How wonderful ! Even an attempt made to offer you obeisance was efficacious enough to accomplish the blessings coveted by your devotees who resorted to you for protection. This unique Grace has never been obtained by the protectors of the world as well as by gods (who are of *Sāttvic* disposition) before. It has been conferred upon a wretched asura (of a *rājasic* nature).

Śrī Śuka said :

3. Having addressed thus, Bali, bowed down to Lord Hari, god Brahmā along with Śiva. Being free from bondage, Bali was highly pleased and he entered the *Sutala* region along with his Asuras.

4. Restoring (the kingdom of) the celestial region to Indra in this way, and having thus fulfilled the desire of Aditi, the Lord ruled over the whole of the world.

5. Seeing that his grandson Bali, the scion of his family, freed from bondage and the recipient of the Grace of the Lord, Prahlāda, full of devotion spoke as follows :

Prahlāda said :

6. Neither god Brahmā, nor goddess Śrī or god Śiva ever received such a Grace. How can others (Indra etc.) obtain it ? You whose feet are worshipped by persons adored by the world have become the protector of the fortress of us, the Asuras.

7. Oh Lord that affords shelter ! Brahmā and other celestials have attained greatness (prosperity and power) by virtue of their enjoyment of the honey in the lotuslike feet of yours. (I, however, wonder) why we, of crooked behaviour and belonging to ferocious races, are made the recipients of your gracious look.

*SD : If mere attempt to bow down is so efficacious, how much more fruitful must be the worship etc. of Lord Hari.

8. Oh how miraculous are your acts and behaviour ! You have created the worlds as the sportive activity of your inconceivable *yoga-māyā*; you are omniscient, nay the veritable in-dwelling soul of all, and hence, view all equally. Even though you are fond of your devotees, there is no partiality in your nature, you are just like the wish-yielding tree, by nature.

The Lord replied :

9. Child Prahlāda ! May you be blessed ! Go happily to your residence in *Sutala* along with your grandson, and enhance the happiness of your kith and kin.

10. You will always see me there standing with a mace in hand, and the bonds of your karmas will be snapped by the highest bliss of seeing me.

Śrī Śuka said :

11-12. With their palms folded and head bowed down, pure-minded Prahlāda, the Supreme Commander of all the Asura forces, along with Bali, respectfully accepted the command of the glorious Lord. Circumambulating the Eternal Person, they bowed again, and with his permission entered the 'Great cavity' (of *Sutala*), Oh King.

13. Thereafter, Oh King ! Lord Viṣṇu whose abode is cosmic waters, and who removes the sins of his votaries, spoke to Śukra who was sitting near, among the sacrificial priests, in that assembly of experts in Vedas.

14. "Oh Brahman ! Do you now make up for the interruption and deficiency in the sacrificial act that was being performed by your disciple. Whatever defects remain in religious performances are rectified even by the look of Brāhmaṇas (much more so if actually performed by them)."

Śukra replied :

15. How can there be any deficiency in ritualistic performance, where you, the presiding Lord of all religious acts, the master of sacrifice who confer their fruit on performers, the sacrifice itself incarnate, are worshipped with complete devotion ?

16. The recital of Your Name rectified all the defects arising out of (wrong pronunciation and intonation of) *mantras* (Vedic verses to be chanted at the time of sacrifices), wrong ritualistic procedure, in-opportuneness of time and unsuitability of place or in the provision of materials for sacrifices.¹

17. Still, however, as, Oh Mighty Lord, You insist on it, I shall carry out your behest. For what constitutes obedience to your commands, is (in itself) the highest beatitude of human beings.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. Gladly accepting Hari's mandate, the worshipful sage Śukra, with the assistance of other Brāhmaṇa sages, rectified the deficiencies in Bali's sacrifice.

19. In this way, having begged the earth (as well as celestial regions) from Bali, Lord Hari disguised as a dwarf, gave back to his brother, the great Indra, the celestial region (as well as the earth) which was usurped from him by his enemies.

20-21. Then for accomplishing the pleasure of Kaśyapa and Aditi, and for the well-being of all creatures, god Brahmā, the head of all the Protectors of the world (*Prajāpati*s) together with gods, sages, manes and Manu and his sons with Dakṣa, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, as well as with Kumāra and god Śiva, crowned Vāmana as the King (and protector) of all the worlds, and the guardians of the worlds.

22-23. For the sake of the prosperity of all, god Brahmā installed Vāmana, the younger brother of Indra as the protector of all Vedas, gods, *dharma* (righteousness), glory, affluence, auspicious vows and of the celestial regions as well as of *Mokṣa* (Liberation of *Samsāra*). Oh King, all created beings thereby felt extremely delighted.

24. Then with the approval of god Brahmā, Indra accompanied by the Protectors of the world, placed Vāmana at their head, carried him to heaven, in a suitable celestial car.

1. Cf. the famous verses quoted by VD.

*yasya smṛtyā ca nāmoktyā tapo-yajña-kriyādiṣu /
nyūnāṁ sampūrṇatāṁ yātī taṁ vande harim acyutam //*

25. With the sovereignty of the three worlds restored to him, and being free from fear due to his being protected by the arms of Vāmana, Indra who was endowed with supreme glory, felt highly delighted.

26-27. Eulogising that extremely miraculous great deed of Viṣṇu and praising Aditi, god Brahmā, Śiva, Kumāra, sages headed by Bhṛgu and others, and masses, all beings, Siddhas, all beings moving in aerial cars, repaired to their respective abodes, Oh King.

28. I have recounted to you everything pertaining to the episode of the Lord of Mighty wide Strides which destroys all the sins of the listener to this story, Oh delight of the Kuru family !

29*. A mortal being who presumes to recount completely and exhaustively the glories of Lord Viṣṇu with mighty wide strides, is like unto a person who would count all the particles of dust on the earth. About such a person the seer of the mantra (RV. 1.1.54.1 etc.) asks, 'Is there born now or likely to be born (in future) such a person (who can do so)? (The answer is 'No').

30. A person who listens to the account of this incarnation of Lord Hari, the god of gods of miraculous deeds, attains to the highest stage (of Liberation from *Samsāra*).

31. If this story is recited repeatedly during the performance of religious observance to propitiate gods, masses and men, the learned declare that that observance is auspiciously well-done.

**Viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi pra vocam*

—RV. 1. 154-1a: AV. 7. 26-1a

VS. 5. 18a, TS. 1.2.13.9a etc.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

*The Fish Incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu**

The King said :

1. Venerable Sir ! I now desire to hear from you the story of the first incarnation of Lord Hari of miraculous exploits, wherein he assumed the form of a fish, through his deluding potency (Māyā).

2. Why did the Supreme Lord, like one subject to (laws of) *Karma*, assume the form of a fish which is disgusting to the world, as being of *tāmasic* nature and unbearable.

3. It behoves you, Oh worshipful Sir, to tell us everything in details (as it took place), as the actions of the Lord of hallowing renown, are conducive to the happiness of all people.

Sūta said :

4. When requested thus by Parīkṣit (One protected by Viṣṇu i.e. Kṛṣṇa¹), the venerable Śuka, the son of Bādarāyaṇa,

*The deluge is a part of race-memory in different parts of the world. It testifies to the sub-mergence of some parts of the world under water, at some distant period in the past, and the memory persisted among Hebrews, Assyrians, Hindus etc. The different periods of such deluges in different parts of the world (for example the Nohaic Flood which lasted for about 371 to 376 days was in West Asia round Mt. Ararat (The Old Testament-Genesis Chs. 6, 7, 8.) Also vide T.A. Bryant's *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, pp. 176-178; 403-4 Special Crusade Edition), while the Indian deluge was in the Himalayan region and it lasted throughout one *Kalpa*, shows that there was really no universal flood, though it appeared to be so to the people in the affected area which was their "world" in ancient times. In India the deluge is described in the *Śatapatha Br.* 1.8.6 the *MBH Vana* 187, *Agni P.* 2, *Matsya P.* 1 & 2. The *Śatapatha* tradition seems to be the earliest and is followed by *MBH* where *Manu*, the saviour of the fish, was at Badari and the locale of the flood was the Himalayan region, but with the *Bh. P.*, King Satyavrata, the saviour of the fish (and a future *Manu*) was a Draviḍa King who got the fish in the river *Kṛta-mālā* in Tamil Nadu. The brief statement in the *Agni P.* makes *Manu* perform penance on the bank of *Kṛta-mālā*, while in the *Matsya P.* 1. 17-18 *Manu* went to Malaya (Kerala) where in his own hermitage the small fish fell above. The symbolism of the fish is explained by V.S. Agrawala *M.P.—a study*, pp. 4-8 with which one may not agree, as it presumes an advanced knowledge in Embryology in that *Purāṇic* era (Gupta Period).

1. Vide Supra 1.12.7-11.

began to narrate the history of Lord Viṣṇu as he acted in the form of a fish.

Śrī Śuka said :

5. (The object of incarnations in general :) When the Almighty Lord desires to protect cows, Brāhmaṇas, gods, righteous persons, the Vedas and the laws of *Dharma* (righteousness) and *Artha* and other *Puruṣārthas*, he assumes a body.

6. (This incarnation is not disgustible.) The Supreme Lord moves like vital airs through higher and lower beings. But Himself being transcendental to *guṇas* (attributes), he is not affected by the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* and hence by the highness or lowness of status.

7. At the close of the last Kalpa (known as *Brāhma*), there was a periodic deluge caused by (the sleep that overcame) *Brahmā*.¹ At that time, Oh King, the worlds known as *Bhū* (this earth) and other (higher) worlds were submerged under the sea.

8. A mighty demon called Haya-grīva (one with the neck and head of a horse) who was in the vicinity of *Brahmā*, carried away the Vedas which (unconsciously) escaped from the mouth of *Brahmā* who was overcome with sleep under the influence of Time, and desired to go to bed.

9. Noticing that (clandestine) act of Hayagrīva the king of *Dānavas*, the glorious Supreme Lord Hari, assumed the form of a small glittering fish.

10. In that Kalpa, a great royal sage, by name Satya-vrata who was absolutely devoted to Nārāyaṇa, was practising austerities, subsisting on water only.

11. That very person (who was then called King Satya-vrata) is well known as Śrāddha-deva, the son of Vivasvat and was installed as Manu by Lord Hari, in this great Kalpa.

1. While commenting on verse No. 46, ŚR raises there a pertinent point as to the nature of this Deluge. He states that as the world was submerged within seven days without the usual draught of 100 years, and having fire from above (the sun) and from below (Śeṣa's poison), this must be an illusory deluge shown to Satyavrata by the Lord. This has been echoed by GS. on this verse and by VD elsewhere.

12. One day while he was offering libations of water (to sages and manes) in the river Kṛtamālā¹, a certain tiny fish was noticed in the water in the hollow of his folded palms.

13. Satyavrata, the King of Draviḍa land, was about to drop the small fish along with the water in the cavity of his folded palms.

14. To that extremely compassionate king, the fish piteously implored, "Oh king, kind unto the afflicted ! How is it that you are throwing a poor helpless creature like me, into the waters of river when I am afraid of aquatic animals who kill their own species.

15. Not knowing that it was Lord Viṣṇu who, out of affection, assumed the form of a fish to confer Grace on him, he made up his mind to Protect the tiny fish.

16. Hearing the piteous appeal of the fish, the merciful king placed it in his water-jar (*Kamaṇḍalu*) and carried it to his hermitage.

17. Growing there in that jar of water (*Kamaṇḍalu*) in one night, and finding the space therein insufficient, she said to the king.

18. "I am not able to accommodate myself in this jar (*Kamaṇḍalu*) with difficulty. Be pleased to provide for me sufficiently spacious abode, wherein I can live comfortably."

19. He took the fish out of that jar (*Kamaṇḍalu*) and placed it in a big earthen pot for waterstorage (or a well). When thrown therein it grew to the dimensions of three cubits within a *muhūrta* (48 minutes).

20. (The fish requested :) "This reservoir is not sufficient to accommodate me comfortably. As I have adopted you as my protector, please provide me with a more spacious place.

21. Bringing that fish from the reservoir, the king threw it into a lake. Occupying the whole (expanse of the) lake with its body, it grew into a monstrous fish.

22. (The fish requested) "I am an aquatic animal, Oh king ! The waters of this lake are not sufficient for my comfort-

1. The river Vaiga in Tamil Nadu. It rises in the Malaya mountain and the holy city of Madura is situated on it—GDAMI, p. 104.

table stay. Be pleased to place me in a pool of inexhaustible storage of water, making arrangement of my safe transit to it."

23. Thus requested, the king carried the fish to various pools of inexhaustible stores of water (each bigger and deeper than the former). When the fish went on growing coextensive with the expanse of the lake, he threw it at last, into the sea.

24. While he was being thus deposited into the sea, he spoke to the king as follows : "Oh heroic king ! It is not proper that you throw me here, as extremely powerful alligators and other aquatic animals will eat me."

25. Being deluded by the fish with the expression of charming words, Satyavrata enquired, "Who are you who beguile us in the form of a fish?"

26. Never such aquatic animal possessing such (miraculous) power and capacity has been seen or heard by us, inasmuch as you fill a lake of one hundred *yojanas* (i.e. 800 miles) in extent, in a single day.

27. Certainly you must be the Imperishable, glorious Lord, Nārāyaṇa or Hari Himself who assumed the form of an aquatic creature for showing Grace unto living beings.

28. Oh Supreme-most Person ! I bow to you who are the Master of the creation, protection and the destruction of the Universe. Oh all-pervading Lord ! You are the real self, the goal and the refuge to us, your votaries, who approach you for protection.

29. All your sportful incarnations are meant for the prosperity and well-being of created beings. I wish to know the main purpose for assuming this form by your worshipful self.

30. Oh Lotus-eyed Lord ! Seeking resort to your feet—you who are the friend and dear soul of all—shall never be futile, as to those others who look upon the body as their soul. For you have manifested your miraculous form to us.

Śrī Śuka said :

31. To king Satyavrata who was addressing him in this way, the lord of the Universe who assumed the body of a fish as he desired to sport in the ocean of deluge at the end of

Yuga (which was about to take place), but who, being fond of his exclusive, unflinching votaries, wished to accomplish the good of king and spoke as follows :

The Glorious Lord said :

32. Oh vanquisher of enemies ! On the seventh day from today, all the three worlds, viz. the terrestrial world, the celestial region and space (aerial region) between the two, will be submerged in the ocean of deluge.

33. While the worlds will be sinking in the waters of the deluge, a spacious boat despatched by me will approach you.¹

34-35. In the meanwhile, you take with you all herbs and plants and seeds of various types (both of inferior and superior qualities) and surrounded by seven sages and accompanied by all varieties of animals, you will board that spacious ship and shall fearlessly sail over the one undivided ocean² completely devoid of light but illuminated with the effulgence of sages (to guide you).

36. While the boat will toss hither and thither by strong gales, I shall be near you. You moor it fast to my horn with a big serpent (*Vāsuki*, as a rope).

37. Oh King ! While the night of god *Brahmā* lasts, I shall move (through the ocean) dragging the ship with you and the sages on board.

38. In reply to your well-reasoned questions, you will find revealed in your heart, through my Grace, my real greatness, which is designated as Supreme Brahman".

39. Having instructed the King in this way, Lord Hari disappeared. *Satyavrata* waited for the period about which Lord *Viṣṇu* forewarned him.

1. In the Bible story of the Flood or Deluge, God gave Noah exact instructions for building the Ark (Genesis 6.14-16). God led Noah and his family as well as pairs of animals into the Ark and shut the door of the Ark (Genesis 7.16). In *MBH Vana* .187.31 the king is asked to build a strong ship.

2. *Ekārṇava*—The original ocean of infinite waters, the source of cosmic creation. In *Bh. P. supra* 3.8.23, it is called *yugānta-loka*. In *Har* the terms *Mahārṇava*, *Ekārṇava*, *Agādha*, *Stabdha Salila* are

40. Spreading the *darbha* grass with their points towards the east, the royal sage sat with his face to the North-East meditating over the feet of Lord Hari in the fish-form.

41. Then the ocean was seen overflowing its boundaries and inundating the earth on all sides, and seemed to be increasing in volume by the heavy downpour from great clouds.

42. While musing over the command of the Lord, he saw the arrival of a boat. Taking with him all the plants and herbs, he boarded the ship alongwith the prominent Brāhmaṇa sages.

43. Being pleased with him, the sages advised him : “Oh King ! Meditate upon Lord Viṣṇu (Keśava). He will be our saviour from this calamity, and bring about our happiness.”

44. Thereupon when the Lord was contemplated upon by the King (as per advice of the sages), there appeared in that vast ocean, a golden fish with one horn and body one hundred thousand *yojanas* in dimensions.

45. Having moored the ship to the horn of that fish with the serpent (-King Vāsuki) as the rope, as per previous instructions of Lord Hari, the King felt highly delighted, and praised Lord Viṣṇu (The slayer of the demon Madhu) as follows :

The King said :

46.* Your Lordship is our highest preceptor¹ Who confer on us Liberation from *Samsāra*—we, whose² knowledge

*ŚR. shows that this is not only not the Final Deluge (*mahā-pralaya*), but not even a periodic one. But just as sage Mārkaṇḍeya was shown the scene of Deluge in this very (Vaiṣvata) Manvantara, King Satyavrata was shown the Deluge with a view to initiate him in the spiritual knowledge. BP. however, controverts this and basing himself on *Laghu-Bhāgavata* subscribes to the theory of two fish-incarnations just as there had been two boar-incarnations.

matryo'pi prādur abhavad dviḥ kalpe'smin varḍhavat /
ādau svāyambhuviyasya daityam ghnāṇāharat śrutiḥ /

He further quotes *Viṣṇudharmottara* for support. The main objection of ŚR i.e. the impossibility of a real Deluge *within seven days*, without any famine etc., is not met by the critics of ŚR.

1. *Paramo gurur bhavān*: The seven sages were Satyavrata's preceptors and the Lord was the preceptor of these sages. Hence the Lord is the “Grand-sire” (preceptor) of Satyavrata—VC.

2. *anādyavidyā, ...saṁviduḥ* : whose knowledge about the supreme soul and soul *as they are*, is obscured by our date-less ignorance whereby we wrongly identify the body with the soul—VR. By ‘*ātma-saṁvit*’ VJ, understands ‘the knowledge of the Supreme Soul’ JG. interprets ‘*avidyā*’ as the Lord's Deluding Potency (*Māyā*).

about the soul is screened (and hence obscured) by Nescience (*avidyā*) which is beginningless, are subjected to suffer the three types of afflictions in this *Samsāra* rooted in that very Nescience. It is through your Grace that we take shelter in You¹ and attain to realize You.

47. This category of beings (subject to the cycle of births and deaths) is ignorant (as he identified body with the soul) and is fettered with (and hence subject to the fruits of) his actions. With the desire of enjoying pleasures (derivable from objects of senses), he performs acts with great pains. By adoring you the wrong notion (consisting of the identity of the body and the soul or 'in doing Karma') is shaken off. May he, being our preceptor, cut off the knot of false notion (or attachment) in our heart.

48. May that Imperishable Supreme Ruler (of the Universe), our preceptor's preceptor be our preceptor, by serving (adoring) whom, a person (desirous of Liberation from *Samsāra*) purges the *tāmasic* dirt from himself and regains its original (blissful) character just as a lump of gold or silver becomes purified of the dross, by being blown into the fire and recovers its original colour and nature.

49. I seek asylum in that Supreme Lord (whose Grace is so unlimited that) not even one out of ten thousand parts of his Grace, the gods, preceptors and all people combined together can, by themselves, show to a person (their devotee).

50. Just as a sightless person is called upon to lead the blind, a spiritually unenlightened person is made the preceptor of ignorant people. Like the light of the sun, you are self-illuminating and providing light to all our senses or are (capable of direct perception). Hence, we have sought you as a preceptor and guide, with the desire of knowing our way and destination.

51. A (spiritually ignorant) person imparts wrong instructions to another person (leading to wealth and

1. *yadyecchayehopasytā* : To whom people attain to after resorting to and through spiritual preceptors.—VR. VR. insists that it is through God's Grace that one comes in contact with spiritual preceptors. But VJ thinks that the very birth in the human species is due to His Grace secured by meritorious acts in the previous births.

gratification of lust) whereby the follower is sure to land in the insuperable darkness (in the form of *Samsāra*). You, however, impart eternal unfailing knowledge (of the soul) in the light of which, a person can easily and definitely attain to his (spiritual) goal.

52. To all the people in the world, you (alone) are certainly a friendly well-wisher, the beloved Supreme Ruler, the very soul, the preceptor, the spiritual wisdom itself and the goal to be realized. But people of 'blind' intellect and understanding, who are deeply rooted in worldly desires, cannot see you even though you exist in their very heart.

53. For the sake of spiritual awakening and guidance, I resort to you, the Almighty Ruler, adorable even to gods and worthy of being sought by all. Oh Lord! Cut asunder the knots (of egotism, ignorance etc.) in my heart, with your words shedding light on the (spiritual) truth and reveal unto me your own self.

Śrī Śuka said :

54. To the king who was praying thus, the glorious Lord, the ancient-most person who was sporting in the ocean in the form of a fish, imparted the highest truth.

55. He revealed to the royal sage Satyavrata the divine compilation of *Purāṇa*¹ (known as the *Matsya Purāṇa*) dealing with the Sāṅkhya system of Philosophy, and the science and practice of Yoga, and also instructed him in the secret lore about the soul.

56. Seated on board the ship along with the sages, the king listened to the discourse on the real nature of the soul and the Eternal Brahman so expounded to them by the glorious Lord as to leave no (shadow of) doubt about it.

1. The *Matsya p.*, in its preamble, (ch. 2.22-24) makes Manu ask the Fish all the topics covered in a *purāṇa* e.g.

utpattim pralayañ caiva varṣān manvantarāṇi ca |
varṣyānu-caritañ caiva bhuvanasya ca vistaram //

But *MBH Vana* 187 is silent on this point. The word *mātsya-purāṇa* etc. in 187.57 means 'the episode of Fish incarnation' narrated in *MBH*—

57. To god Brahmā who was awakened after the end of the Pralaya (Deluge), Lord Hari restored the Vedas after killing the demon Hayagrīva.

58. That King Satyavrata who was thus blessed with discriminating knowledge and spiritual wisdom, has become Vaivasvata Manu in this Kalpa, through the Grace of Viṣṇu.

59. He who listens to the great story consisting of the dialogue between the royal sage Satyavrata and Viṣṇu who, through his Māyā, assumed the form of a horned fish, stands absolved of all sins.

60. A person who, every day, extols this incarnation of Lord Hari, finds that all his desires are accomplished here, and he attains to the Final Beatitude (hereafter).

61. I do bow unto the Lord who is the cause of everything and who disguised himself as a fish¹ in the cosmic waters of the Deluge, and killing the demon (Hayagrīva), restored to Brahmā the corpus of the Śruti texts which were stolen away from his mouths (by Hayagrīva) when his (Brahmā's) powers became dormant in sleep and who imparted the knowledge of Brahman to Satyavrata and the seven sages.²

1. GS. on the authority of VC. states that this fish of a curved body is called *āḍi* in common parlance.

2. Curiously enough as a *phala-śruti* of this *skandha*, VD quotes a *purāṇic* story of a king Viṣṇujit who was absolved of the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa by listening to the VIII Skandha of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

SKANDHA NINTH

CHAPTER ONE

The story of King Sudyumna

The King (Parikṣit) requested :

1. All the Manu-epochs (*Manvantaras*) described by you and the (account of) glorious heroic feats of Lord Hari of infinite prowess and energy, achieved during those epochs as narrated by you, have been heard by me.

2-3. I learnt from you that he who, at the end of the last *Kalpa*, was the royal sage named Satyavrata, the King of Draviḍas (or Draviḍa country), attained spiritual knowledge by worshipping the Supreme Person, has verily become a Manu (Śrāddhadeva), the Son of Vivasvat; I have also heard from you the (history of) his sons, the kings, of whom Ikṣvāku was prominent.

4. Be pleased to describe to us in details, Oh Brahman, the history of the race and the deeds of those belonging to that line, separately, as we are ever eager to listen to them, Oh highly blessed sage.

5. Kindly relate unto us the heroic exploits of all those kings of hallowed (or sanctifying) renown who belonged to the past, who will rule in future and who belong to the present age.

Sūta said :

6. When accosted in these words by king Parikṣit, in the assembly of the exponents of Vedas and Brahman, venerable Śuka, the expert in the highest form *dharma*¹ proceeded to narrate in details.

1. This *dharma* is 'the extolling the excellences of the Lord' according to VR, while 'Protection of the subjects is the *dharma* of crowned kings' (VJ).

Śrī Śuka said :

7. Oh chastiser of enemies ! Listen to the main events in the history of the race of Manu (in brief), for it will not be possible to describe it in details for centuries together.

8. At the end of the *Kalpa*, there was only the Supreme Person, who is the Soul of all beings high and low. There was neither universe nor anything else.

9. From his navel sprouted forth the calyx of a gold lotus wherein was born the self-created four-faced god Brahmā, Oh mighty king.

10. From his mind was born Marīci and from Marīci was born Kaśyapa. From Kaśyapa and his wife Aditi, the daughter of Dakṣa (Prajāpati) was born a son called Vivasvat.

11. From Vivasvat and his wife Samjñā was born Śrāddha-deva, the Manu and through his wife Śraddhā, the self-controlled eminent Śrāddhadeva begot the (following) ten sons :

12. (Namely) Ikṣvāku, Nṛga, Śaryāti, Diṣṭa, Dhr̥ṣṭa, Karūṣaka, Narīṣyat, Pr̥ṣaddhra, Nabhaga, Kavi.

13. It is reported that in the beginning, when Manu was childless, the worshipful and (spiritually) powerful Vasiṣṭha performed a sacrifice, in honour of Mitra and Varuṇa.

14. In that sacrifice, Śraddhā, the wife of Manu who was observing the *payo-vrata* vow, approached the *Hotṛ*-priest, paid obeisance to him and begged for the birth of a daughter.

15. The *Hotṛ* (the reciter of Vedic *mantras* in a sacrifice) who was directed by the *Adhvaryu* (the officiating head sacrificial priest), was brooding over the request of Śraddhā. The Brāhmaṇa (contemplating over her request) with full concentration of mind, offered oblations while uttering the mystic word—*Vaṣaṭ* (and propitiated the fire).

16. As a consequence of the dereliction of duty on the part of the *Hotṛ* (the reciter of *mantras*), a daughter named Ilā was born. Not being much delighted at the sight of the daughter (when the sacrifice was performed for the birth of a son), Manu addressed the preceptor (as follows) :

17. “Worshipful Sir, what is this that the act (of sacrifice) performed by the expert exponents of Vedas has led to

the contrary result? Ah! What a pity! There should not have been such a reversal (in the fruit) of Vedic *Mantras*.

18. You are experts in the knowledge and sacrificial application of the *Mantras* and are self-disciplined. You have burnt down all your sins by your austerities. What is the cause of the failure of this expectation. This is as impossible as falsehood in the case of gods. (Just as what gods think or say turns out to be true, your will power should have similarly prevailed)".

19. Hearing this (complaining) speech (of Manu), the worshipful great-grandfather¹ Vasiṣṭha came to know the transgression committed by the reciter of *mantras* (*Hotṛ*) and replied to Vaivasvata Manu (the son of the Sun, Vivasvat).

20. "This frustration of your expectation is due to the dereliction of duty on the part of the *Hotṛ*. Yet by virtue of my spiritual power, I shall accomplish your object of having a good son".

21. The adorable Vasiṣṭha of great renown, determined thus and with the desire of securing manhood to Ilā prayed Lord Viṣṇu, The Eternal Person.

22. The glorious Lord Hari, The Ruler (of the universe), being pleased with Vasiṣṭha, conferred on him the boon sought for (by him). In virtue of that boon, Ilā became Sudyumna, the foremost among men.

23. On one occasion, riding a horse of Sindhu breed, and accompanied by a few ministers, he went on a hunting expedition in a forest, Oh great king.

24. Clad in an armour and arming himself with a beautiful bow and extremely wonderful arrows, the hero went to the northern direction, in pursuit of the game (a deer).

25. It is reported that the prince entered a forest on the foothills of mount Meru, where the glorious Lord Śiva sports amorously with his Spouse Umā.

1. It should have been grand-father's grand-father as can be seen from the following genealogy of Śuka from Vasiṣṭha:

Vasiṣṭha—Śakti—Parāśara—Vyāsa—Śuka but if *pra-pitāmaha* is to be defended (as VD does it) by saying that the father and the son are to be regarded as one as per the Śruti text *ātmaiva putranāma'si*, the chain of identity will reach to Śuka also.

26 Hardly did Sudyumna, that vanquisher of inimical warriors, enter the forest, when he found himself transformed into a woman and the horse into a mare, Oh king.

27. Noticing a change of sex in themselves, all his followers became dejected at heart and began to stare at each other.

King Parīkṣit asked :

28. Oh venerable Sir ! How is it that the region came to acquire such power ? Who made it so ? Be pleased to answer this query, as our curiosity has become intense.

Śrī Śuka said :

29. On one occasion, sages, who were strict observers of sacred vows, came to that region (Ilāvṛta) to pay visit to god Śiva, the lord of mount Kailāsa, dispelling darkness from all quarters (with their spiritual lustre).

30. Having seen them, goddess Pārvatī, who was then ungarmented, got extremely abashed, and quickly getting up from her consort's lap, put on her raiments immediately.

31. Noting the union of the divine couple in amorous enjoyment, the sages instantly turned back and proceeded to the hermitage of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

32. Then, with a desire to satisfy his divine beloved, the glorious god Śiva announced : 'Whoever enters this region, shall (automatically and instantly) turn into a veritable woman.

33. Hence all males avoid going to that forest since then. She (Sudyumna, now a woman Ilā) went on wandering from one forest to another, accompanied by her retinue.

34. Now beholding that excellent young woman surrounded by ladies, (leisurely) wandering on the precincts of his hermitage, god Budha (the presiding deity of the planet Mercury) conceived an amorous passion for her.

35. That lady with beautiful eyebrows, in her turn, reciprocated his love and sought him, the son of King Soma, as her husband. He begot on her a son named Purūravas.

36. We hear it reported that King Sudyumna of Manu's

race who was thus transformed into a woman, happened to remember Vasiṣṭha, his family preceptor.

37. (As soon as he was thus remembered, Vasiṣṭha appeared on the scene). Seeing that sad plight of Sudyumna, Vasiṣṭha was overwhelmed with compassion. Being deeply moved, and wishing to restore the manhood of Sudyumna, he approached (appealed to) god Śaṅkara.

38. Being pleased with Vasiṣṭha and with a view to grant his prayer as well as to retain the veracity of his own utterance, the glorious god Śiva spoke as follows, Oh King.

39. 'Sudyumna who is born of your race, shall be a man for one month and a woman for another month alternately. May he protect the earth at his will, under this arrangement'¹.

40. Having accomplished his desire of restoration to manhood through the grace of his preceptor, he ruled over the earth under the above-mentioned arrangement. But his subjects did not approve of it.

41. He got three sons, Utkala, Gaya and Vimala. They became righteous rulers of the Deccan (the southern region including Mahārāṣṭra).

42. With the ripeness of the age, King Sudyumna, the ruler over pratiṣṭhāna² handed over (the kingdom of) the earth to (his son) Purūravas, and went to forest (for performance of penance).

1. The story is briefly mentioned in *MBH. Ādi* 75.16, *Anu* 147. 26, *Linga P.* 1.65.

2. Most probably *Jhusi* opposite to Allahabad across the Gaṅgā. Mentioned in *MBH Vana*. 85.76. According to *Linga P.* I.65 the kingdom of Ikṣvāku was divided among Sudyumna's sons, while according to Vasiṣṭha's advice, the son of Ilā (the female transformation of Sudyumna) Purūravas, was given Pratiṣṭhānapura as he had no hereditary rights on the kingdom of Ikṣvāku. But *Bh.P.* 9.2.2 shows that Ikṣvāku was born, when Sudyumna left for the forest.

D.P. Mishra's conjectural identification of this Pratiṣṭhāna with 'Ortospana' (near Kabul—'nearer Bactria, the home province of Purūravas') of Greek writers deserves consideration. Vide *studies—Proto. Hist. of Ind.* pp. 116-17. —

CHAPTER TWO

History of Karūṣa and other four sons of Manu

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When his son Sudyumna thus left (for the forest), Manu, the son of Vivasvat, being desirous of begetting a son performed penance for a hundred years, on the bank of the Yamunā.

2. Thereafter he worshipped Lord Hari (by performing a sacrifice) for (male) progeny; and he had ten sons, Ikṣvāku being the eldest, all resembling himself.

3. Manu's (eighth) son, Pṛṣadhra, was entrusted with the duty of protecting the cows, by his preceptor (as Vasiṣṭha found him competent to tend the bulls). Vigilantly he tended the cows at night, remaining alert in the posture called *Virāsana* (kneeling on one knee).

4. On one occasion, while it was raining at night, a tiger made its way into the cowpen. Cows which were lying there, got panicky and springing to their feet, ran about in that enclosure.

5-6. The powerful tiger seized one of the cows, and she, overwhelmed with fear, screamed loudly. It is reported that when Pṛṣadhra heard that screaming in agony, he rushed in haste in that direction, with a sword in hand. In the darkness of night, when even stars were invisible due to clouds, he unwittingly chopped off the head of a tawny coloured cow, believing it to be a tiger.

7. The tiger too got its ear severed with the end of the sword in that stroke, but escaped in extreme panic, dripping blood all the way.

8. Pṛṣadhra, the destroyer of inimical warriors, who believed that the tiger had been killed, found, at the close of night, to his sore grief, that a reddish-brown cow had been killed by him, in the (darkness of) night.

9. To Pṛṣadhra who has unknowingly committed the sin of killing a cow, Vasiṣṭha, the family preceptor (instead of giving him the expiatory rite or procedure for such unwitting acts) pronounced the following imprecation : "In conse-

quence of this (thoughtless) act, you shall be not even the vilest of Kṣatriyas but a veritable Śūdra.”

10. When cursed in this way by the family preceptor, the great warrior accepted it (respectfully) with folded palms. He observed the vow of life-long celibacy—a vow so esteemed by sages.

11. Being exclusively and absolutely devoted to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the absolutely pure (blemishless), transcendental, universal Spirit, he became a friend and a well-wisher of all beings, impartial to all.

12-13. Completely devoid of attachment, with a serene mind, and with all senses under full control, bereft of all possessions, maintaining himself on whatever came to him by chance (without asking for it), fixing his mind in the Supreme Soul, satiated in spiritual knowledge¹, and absorbed in meditation, he roamed about the earth, presenting an appearance of a blind and deaf dunce.

14. Leading this way of life, he happened to enter a forest where, seeing the outbreak of forest-conflagration, he silently allowed his body to be consumed by it and became one with the transcendental Brahman.

15. And the younger son Kavi² (even as a child) had no desire for worldly objects. Renouncing the kingdom along with the relatives, he enthroned the self-effulgent Supreme Person in his heart and repairing to the forest, even in his boyhood, ultimately attained to the Supreme Brahman.

16. From Karūṣa, the son of Manu, was descended the Kṣatriya clan called Kārūṣas who ruled over the northern regions, were friendly to Brāhmaṇas and devoted to righteousness.

17. The Kṣatriya clan called Dhārṣṭa was born from Dhṛṣṭa but attained Brāhmaṇahood (Brahmanical virtues and way of life) on the earth. In the race of Nṛga, Nṛga had a son Sumati whose son was Bhūtajyoti to whom was born a son, Vasu.

1. v.l. *jñāna-hṛṣṭa*—Delighted in spiritual knowledge.

2. VJ. takes *Kavi* 'wise' as the adj. qualifying *Prṣadhra* and treats this verse as a further elucidation of the above (12-13) verses. (*uktameva viroṣṣoti*).

18. Vasu had a son Pratika whose son Oghavān was the father of a son called Oghavat and a daughter named Oghavatī whom Sudarśana married.

19. Citrasena who was born from Nariṣyanta had a son called Dakṣa. Dakṣa's son was Mīḍhvān of whom was born Kūrca who had a son called Indrasena.

20. Indrasena's son was Vitihotra who got a son named Satyaśravas who, on his part, had Uruśravas as his son. Devadatta was born from Uruśravas.

21. The venerable fire-god Agni himself was born as a son of Uruśravas, and was called Agniveśya. He became famous as a great sage Kānina or Jātukarṇya.

22. From Agniveśya descended a Brāhmaṇa clan known as Agniveśyāyana, Oh king. The race of Nariṣyanta has been thus described in details. Now listen to the line of Diṣṭa.

23. Nābhāga, another son of Diṣṭa (different from the one to be described later¹) became a *Vaiśya* by following the profession (agriculture, cow-tending etc.) of that class. His son was Bhalandana whose son was Vatsapṛiti.

24. Prāṁśu was the son of Vatsapṛiti. Prāṁśu's son is wellknown as Pramati; whose son was Khanitra², Khanitra's son was Cākṣuṣa, the father of Vivimśati.

25. Rambha³ was the son of Vivimśati. Rambh's son was the religious Khaninetra, and Karandhama was Khaninetra's son, Oh great king.

26. His son was Avikṣit. His son Marutta became a sovereign of the whole of the globe of the earth—the same sovereign for whom the great *yogin*, Samvartta, the son of sage Aṅgiras, performed sacrifices.

27. Nobody else has ever performed a sacrifice so gloriously as did Marutta. All the utensils therein were of pure gold, and whatever other materials were used in his sacrifice, were auspicious and beautiful.

28. Indra (drank so much *Soma* in that sacrifice that he) became inebriated and Brāhmaṇas were oversatisfied with the gifts (*dakṣiṇā*). Marut-gods served food (in that sacrifice), and

1. Vide infra ch. 4.

2. VR. reads 'Svamitra'.

3. VR. reads 'Dambha'.

the whole fraternity of gods (Viśvedevāḥ) were the members of the sacrificial assembly.¹

29. Marutta had a son called Dama whose son was Rājyavardhana; his son was Sudhṛti and Nara was born as a son of Sudhṛti.

30. His son was Kevala whose son was Bandhumān of whom was born Vegavān. Bandhu was his (Vegavān's) son. Of Bandhu was born the king of the earth Tṛṇabindu.

31. Being an abode of praiseworthy qualities, a prominent heavenly damsel Alambuṣā resorted to him (as his wife), and bore him a number of sons and a daughter known as Iḍaviḍā (v. l. Ilavilā).

32. The sage Viśravas begot on her a son known as Kubera (the donor of wealth). From his father who was a master of *yogas*, Kubera received the Supreme Lore (about the soul).

33. The sons of this king were Viśāla, Śūnyabandhu, and Dhūmraketu. Viśāla was the founder of a dynasty and built the city of Vaiśālī.

34. His (Viśāla's) son was Hemacandra, whose son was Dhūmrākṣa. From his son Saṁyama were born Kṛśāśva and Devaja².

35. From Kṛśāśva was born Somadatta who, by performing horse-sacrifices, worshipped the Supreme Person, the presiding deity of sacrifices³ and attained to the foremost (highest goal through the support of the master of *yoga*).

1. This is nothing but an echo of:

*marutaḥ pariveśfāro maruttasyāvasan grhe /
āvīkṣitasya kāmā-prer viśvedevāḥ sabhāsada iti //*

—*Ait. Br.* 8.21.14, *Śat.Br.* 13.5.4.6. *MBH* 12.29.18.

The same is repeated in *MBH Droṇa* 55.43-44.

2. But according to VR & VJ. Dhūmrākṣa's son was Sahadeva and Kṛśāśva was Sahadeva's son.

3. *Iḍaspati* (1) The Supreme Person to be propitiated by performing *Iḍā Homa*—VR.

(2) Overlord of the earth (*Iḍā*)—VR.

— (3) The Lord who gives us food—VJ.

— (4) The Lord bestower of the Power of speech—VJ.

36. Somadatta's son was Sumati, whose son was Janamejaya. These rulers of the kingdom of Vaiśālī held up the glory (glorious tradition of Tṛṇabindu).

CHAPTER THREE

The story of Cyavana and Sukanyā

Śrī Suka continued :

1. It is reported that Manu's son, king Śaryāti was the master of the Vedic lore and it was he who, in the sacrificial session of the Aṅgiras, authoritatively explained the procedure of the ritualistic course of the second day (of that session).

2. He had a daughter Sukanyā by name, whose eyes were beautiful like lotuses. Accompanied by her, he went to the hermitage of the sage Cyavana.¹

3. Surrounded by her maids (of honour), she was leisurely wandering in the forest enjoying the sight of beautiful trees, when she happened to notice a pair of glow-worm-like luminous objects, in the hole of an ant-hill.

4. Impelled by her fate, she, in her childish innocence, perforated the pair of shining objects with a thorn, and blood flowed profusely out of them.

5. That very moment instantly, there was obstruction in the lower passage of his soldiers (stoppage of the excretion

1. A sage of Bhṛgu Clan. *MBH. Vana* chs 122, 123 & 124 give how he was blinded by Sukanyā and was pacified when Sukanyā married him, and how at his request the celestial physicians Aśvinikumāras rejuvenated him in consideration of a share in Soma-drinking, and how he petrified Indra's arm when in protest against Aśvinikumāra's share in Soma, Indra attacked with his Vajra. The story is repeated in the *Devī Bhāgavata Skandha VII. Chs.2-7*. In that story Sukanyā deliberately perforates the eyes of Cyavana in spite of his warning. A number of verses are common to *MBH. Vana*, the *Bh.P.* and the *Devī Bhāgavata*, possibly all borrowing from a common source which supplied the story background for *RV.1.116* (A hymn to AŚVINS).

and urination). Observing that, the royal sage was astonished and enquired of his men.

6. 'Has any of you given offence or done wrong to Cyavana, the descendant of the Bhṛguṣ. Obviously, someone of us must have profaned his hermitage'.

7. Being terrified, Sukanyā confessed to her father. "Something has been done by me in ignorance, inasmuch as a pair of glittering objects were unknowingly pierced by me".

8. Hearing the words of his daughter, Śaryāti was seized with fear. He slowly tried to appease the sage, lying hidden in the ant-hill.

9. Having ascertained the desire of the sage, the king gave (in marriage) his daughter to the sage. Having thus extricated himself from the scrape, and taking his leave (of the sage), he proceeded to his capital cautiously.

10. Having obtained the extremely wrathful Cyavana as her husband, Sukanyā who (studied and) understood his mental proclivities, won him over by meticulously careful obedience.

11. After a lapse of some time after this, the twingods Aśvinikumāras visited his hermitage. Worshipping them (with due formalities as guests), he earnestly requested, "Oh ye celestial physicians ! Be pleased to restore to me my youth.

12. Even though you are not eligible to share the Soma-juice, I shall bear you both gobletfuls of Soma in the Soma sacrifice. Be pleased to bestow on me that youthfulness and beauty, covetable to young damsels."

13. "Assuredly" approved the foremost of physicians rejoicing at his offer. "May your worship be pleased to plunge in this pool created by Siddhas."

14. With these words, Cyavana, whose body was stricken with old age and was all over covered with protuberant veins, and appeared repulsive due to his wrinkles and grey hairs, was made to enter the pool by the pair of Aśvin gods.

15. There emerged three men (from that pool)—all bewitchingly beautiful, captivating to women, adorned with lotus-garlands and ear-rings, clad in rich garments, resembling each other in form.

16. Finding them all resembling each other in form, resplendent like the sun, the chaste lady Sukanyā, being unable to distinguish as to who her husband was, sought refuge with Aśvinikumāras (to help her in knowing the husband, by standing apart).

17. Being pleased with her fidelity to her husband, the Aśvinikumāras pointed out her husband. Taking leave of the sage, they left for the celestial region, in their heavenly car.

18. One day, king Śaryāti, intending to perform a sacrifice, went to the hermitage of Cyavana, and found a man glorious like the Sun, by the side of his daughter.

19. When the daughter bowed down to him (to pay respect), the king was not much pleased in his mind about her, and instead of giving the usual benedictions, censured her.

20. "What have you intended to do? Your husband, a sage respectfully saluted by all the world, is deceived by you, inasmuch as abandoninig the aged husband falsely approved by you, you have resorted to a way-farer as your paramour, you unchaste woman !

21. How is it that your mentality stooped to such low wickedness? Otherwise, you are born in a noble family of righteous persons, and this is a vile stigma on the family. You have lost your sense of shame and are harbouring a paramour, hurling thereby the families of your father and husband into the dark depth of hell."

22. To her father who was thus indicting her, Sukanyā, of pure gentle smiles, replied slightly laughing, "Father ! This is your son-in-law Cyavana, the delight (or descendant) of Bhṛgu".

23. Then she reported to her father how he (Cyavana) came to regain his youth and beautiful looks. Full of astonishment and being extremely pleased with her, he embraced his daughter.

24. Cyavana made the heroic king Śaryāti to perform a Soma sacrifice, in which by dint of his personal ascetic powers, he bore a cup of Soma to the pair of Aśvinikumāras, even though they were not entitled for a share in Soma till then.

25. The irascible Indra was instantly enraged and raised his Vajra (thunderbolt) to kill him. But Cyavana, a descendant of Bhṛgu, petrified Indra's arm along with the Vajra.

26. Thenceforth, all of them (gods) agreed to give a share in Soma juice to Aśvinikumāras who, being physicians, were previously excluded from the oblations of Soma to them.

27. Śaryāti had three sons—Uttāna-barhis, Ānarta and Bhūriṣṇa. Revata was born of Ānarta.

28. Building a city called Kuśasthalī, in the middle of the sea, he occupied it and ruled over the country called Ānarta (and adjoining territories), Oh subduer of enemies.

29-30. One hundred excellent sons, of whom Kakudmin was the eldest, were born to him. Taking with him his daughter Revatī Kakudmī went to god Brahmā for consulting him for a suitable husband to his daughter. The region of Brahmā was then open. As a musical concert of Gandharvas, was going on, he did not get opportunity (to speak to god Brahmā) and waited for a moment.

31. After the conclusion of the musical programme, he bowed down to god Brahmā (the first created god), and told the object of his visit. Hearing that, god Brahmā laughed loudly and said.

32. "Oh King! Suitors that you had in your mind, have already been swallowed up by Time long ago. We do not even hear of their sons, grandsons, great-grandsons. Nay, not even their *gotras* (races).

33-35. The time calculated as thrice nine (i. e. twenty-seven) revolutions of the group of four *yugas* has now elapsed. Therefore, now you go back and offer this jewel of a daughter to the extremely mighty Baladeva, the ray of the God of gods, and a jewel among men. The glorious Lord, the creator of all beings, the chanting and hearing of whose name is meritorious, has incarnated on the earth by his own *amśa* (ray) for lightening the burden of the earth". When thus commanded, he bowed down to the unborn god Brahmā, and returned to his capital which was already abandoned by his brothers, out of fear of *yakṣas*, who were scattered all over the quarters (different parts of the earth).

36. Having given in marriage his extremely beautiful daughter to the mighty Balarāma, the king repaired to the hermitage of Nārāyaṇa, known Badarī, to perform austerities.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Account of Nābhāga and Ambariṣa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Nābhāga was the son of Nabhaga. He was the youngest (of the brothers), the most learned and wise, and had spent (an unduly) long time as a celibate (in his teacher's hermitage). When he returned (from the hermitage of the preceptor and demanded his share of the ancestral property), they gave him their father (a commitment of father's maintenance) as his share of hereditary property, (as they have shared among themselves the whole of their father's estate presuming that Nābhāga would remain life-long celibate, and never return).

2. "Brothers ! What have you allotted as my share (in the ancestral property) ?" (Nābhāga asked). (We forgot you then or Hearing of your renunciation, no share was set aside in the division of the property). 'Now, however, we give father (maintenance of father) as your share'¹ (replied the brothers). (Nābhāga went to his father and told him), "My elder brothers have allotted you as my share in the family property, dear father". The father told, "Do not place any faith in their words, Oh child"² (I am not a property to be enjoyed, but am a life-long commitment for maintenance).

1. "Let us go to father. If father asks us to give you a share, we shall"—VR.

VJ reads : *bhajāna pitaram* : 'If you want a share, go to your father, propitiate him and ask for your share. We also shall come and ask him'.

2. Do not entertain any desire for a share in the family property —VR.VJ.

3. (But for your maintenance, I advise). These (neighbouring) intelligent descendants of the Aṅgiras family are now engaged in a sacrificial session (of a long duration). But on every sixth day, they get confounded about the exact procedure ordained for the sacrifice, Oh learned son.

4-5. You teach those noble-minded (great-souled) Brāhmaṇas the two hymns (sūktas) celebrating the *Viśvedevas*¹. When (after completion of the sacrifice), they will ascend to heaven, they will bestow upon you all their wealth that remains unspent after the sacrificial session. Hence you approach them (the Aṅgirasas). He abided by his father's advice. They donated to him all the wealth that remained after the sacrificial session and went to heaven.

6. While he was about to accept that wealth, a certain man, of black complexion (Rudra), came from the north and claimed, "All this wealth in the premises of this house is mine".

7. Then replied the descendant of Manu, "This is mine inasmuch as it is given to me by the sages (who performed the sacrifice)". "Let this question (dispute) between us be referred to your father." Accordingly Nābhāga asked his father.

8. (His father replied), "On a certain occasion, sages have offered all that remains in the sacrificial hall as Rudra's share.² The god deserves (has a rightful claim on) the whole of that wealth."

9. (On return) Nābhāga bowed to him (Rudra) and reported, "Oh Lord ! My father said that all this is your property. Oh Brahman ! I propitiate you by bowing (apologizing with) my head low respectfully.

10. Rudra said, "Since what was spoken by your father was according to (the canons of) religion and you too speak the truth, I shall impart to you, the seer of Vedic *mantras*, spiritual knowledge about the Eternal Brahman.

10A. One should never, even under duress, speak the untruth. Nor should one covet another man's property. I

1. The Sūktas are :

(1) *idam itthā raudraṁ gṛtavācaḥ* — RV.10.61.1

(2) *ye yajñena dakṣiṇayā samaktāḥ* — RV.10.62.1

2. *Vide Supra Bh.P. 4.6.53. ŚR supports this by the Śruti text : ucchoṣaṇā=bhāgo vai rudraḥ /*

am extremely pleased with truthfulness and a truthful person is liked (desired) by me.

11. Please accept this wealth, the remainder of my sacrifice, which is granted to you". Saying this the glorious Lord Rudra, who is kind to the truthful, disappeared.

12. He who remembers this sacred story¹ with full concentration, both in the morning and in the evening, becomes blessed with spiritual wisdom, well-versed in the Vedic *mantras*, and attains his good (Liberation from Saṁsāra) or the true knowledge of Ātman as it is.

13. From Nābhāga was born Ambariṣa who was an eminent devotee of Lord Viṣṇu and had realized fully the Brahman. He was so virtuous that even the imprecation of the Brāhmaṇa Durvāsas which was never ineffective before, could not touch him.

The King (Parikṣit) asked :

14. Worshipful Sir ! I am eager to hear the story of that intelligent royal sage against whom the Brāhmaṇa's curse (in the form of the destructive female deity) which is irresistible, could not prevail.

Śrī Suka said :

15-16. The highly fortunate Ambariṣa inherited the earth with all its seven continents, inexhaustible fund of wealth, and incomparable power and glory in this world—all of which is extremely difficult for men to attain. But he regarded all this as unreal as a dream. He understood correctly the perishability of wealth, and that it ultimately leads man to darkness (of hell).

17. He attained to such a supreme devotion to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, and so much friendly affection toward his pious devotees, as to regard this universe as a clod of earth —(what to speak of his kingdom ?)

18. He engaged his mind (in meditating) on the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, his speech in singing of the excellences of Lord Viṣṇu (Vaikuṇṭha), his hands in services e.g. cleansing

1. As ŚR. points out this story of Nābhāga is based on a legend of the same person recorded in the *Bahyā Brāhmaṇa*.

the temple of Hari and such other duties, and his ears (sense of hearing) in listening to excellent stories of the Imperishable Lord.

19. He employed his eyes (faculty of seeing) in beholding the images and shrines of god Viṣṇu (Mukunda), his tactile sense in embracing the persons of the servants of gods, his olifactory sense in smelling the fragrance of the Tulasi leaves dedicated to his feet, and his tongue (sense of taste) to what is offered to the Lord.

20. He used his feet in walking to the holy places hallowed with Lord Hari's feet, his head to bow down to the feet of god Viṣṇu (Hṛṣikeṣa), his own desire in the humble services of the Lord, and not for the fulfilment of his worldly desires—All he did for enhancing his fondness or devotion to those who have resorted to the Lord of excellent renown.

21. In this way, he dedicated all his acts and round of duties to the glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Ruler who bestows the fruits of the performance of sacrifices, every day. Placing his faith in the presence of the Lord in all beings (or beings devoted to Viṣṇu with their heart and soul¹), and according to the advice of those who were devoted to the Lord and Brāhmaṇas (like his family preceptor Vasiṣṭha), he ruled over the earth.

22. He worshipped the Supreme Ruler, the presiding Deity of the Sacrifice, by performing horse-sacrifices in which all the 'limbs' (detailed parts of the sacrifice) were duly conducted and sumptuous sacrificial fees were paid befitting his great affluence. He performed these sacrifices under the guidance of great sages like Vasiṣṭha, Asita and Gautama in a desert place called Dhanva in the opposite direction of the current of the river Sarasvatī, (changing the venue of sacrifice along its banks from its mouth towards its source upwards.)

23. In his sacrifices, the sacrificial priests and members of the sacrificial assembly were so richly attired (and adorned), and through wonder or meticulous care in carrying out their

1. GS, GD quote the ideal devotion of *gopīs* in this context :

tan-manaskās tadālāpās tad-vicetṣās tadātmikāḥ !

tad-guṇāneva gāyantyo nātmāgārāṇi sasmaruḥ !!

Bh.P.10.30.44

duties, they forgot to wink and looked like the celestials (in form, dress ornaments and unwinkingness).

24. The heavenly region which is so dear to immortal gods was not coveted by his men, as (subjects) they constantly listened to and sang the glorious deeds of Lord Viṣṇu of excellent renown.

25. To them (his subjects) who visualized Lord Viṣṇu in their hearts, objects of pleasure which are not easily accessible even to Siddhas (who are endowed with mystic powers), did not fascinate and gladden, as they (objects of pleasure) are (as if) thrown into the shade by the essential blissfulness of self-realization (enjoyed by them).¹

26. In this way the king, by his path of devotion combined with austerities, propitiated Lord Hari by abiding by the ordained course of duties, and gradually dissociated himself from all attachments.

27. He developed the sense of unreality of (and hence did not cherish any attachments to) his palaces, queens, sons, relatives, excellent elephants, chariots, horses, foot-soldiers, his inexhaustible (quantity of) jewels, ornaments, arms etc. and to his unlimited treasures.

28. Being pleased with his unflinching single-minded devotion, Lord Hari assigned to him, for the protection of his servant (devotee) his discus Sudarśana which struck terror in inimical forces.

29. With a desire to propitiate Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), the hero, along with his chief queen of a similar pious disposition, undertook the vow of observing a fast on the *Dvādāśī* day (viz. twelfth day of the dark and the bright half of every lunar month), for the period of one year.

30. At the close of the observance of the vow, in the month of Kārttika, he observed fast for three previous con-

1. Not that Ambariṣa did not desire the objects of sense-pleasure due to their scarcity. They were in abundance as they were impelled and brought about by His essential greatness, though they were difficult for even Siddhas to obtain. He, however, was not enamoured of them as he saw Lord Viṣṇu in his heart—VJ.

secutive nights.¹ On one *Dvādasi*, he took his bath in the Yamunā and worshipped Lord Hari in the forest-grove of the (demon) Madhu (the site of future Mathurā).

31-32. After performing the ablution of Hari according to the procedure laid down for the *Mahābhiṣeka* (royal coronation type ablution or a bath in which two thousand *palas* of gold is gifted) along with abundantly rich variety of accessories and ornaments, sandal paste, flowers, offerings and other articles of worship, he adored Lord Viṣṇu with a mind completely absorbed in him, and worshipped highly virtuous² Brāhmaṇas even though they had already accomplished their desire.

33-34A. He donated and sent to the houses of pious Brāhmaṇas six hundred million cows of good disposition and attractive appearance, all young and yielding milk in abundance. Their horns were encased in gold and hoofs plated in silver, and all were covered with rich cloth. They were gifted along with their calves and other necessary accessories (such as bells, pots for milking etc).

34B-35. Having first fed Brāhmaṇas with sweet and wholesome dish of excellent quality, and with the permission of those Brāhmaṇas who received their desired objects he (King Ambariṣa) was making preparations of breaking his fast, when there arrived an unexpected guest who was no other than the venerable sage Durvāsa himself.

36. The king received his guest respectfully, by rising from his seat and proffering a respectable seat and other articles of worship, and bowing down to his feet, he requested him to take meals.

1. In the vow known as *Ekādaśi-vrata*, one has to take no meals at night on the 10th day, to observe complete fast on the 11th day and after breaking fast in the morning of the 12th day, observe fast at night.

2. *mahābhāga* :

VD. quotes a definition of *mahābhāga Brāhmaṇas*

tapo-vidyā-dayā-yuktā hari-niṣṭhaika-cetasaḥ |

pratigraha-nivṛttā ye mahābhāgā dvijāḥ smṛtāḥ ||

‘Those who are engaged in penance, learning and merciful activities and whose minds are solely and unflinchingly devoted to Lord Hari, and who have ceased to accept gifts, are regarded as *mahābhāga* (highly virtuous) Brāhmaṇas.’

37. Gladly accepting the invitation, he went to perform the prescribed religious duties (of the mid-day). Contemplating over the Supreme Brahman, he plunged in the holy waters of the Yamunā.

38. (As it is necessary to break the fast of *ekādaśī* during the period of *dvādaśī* and) as only half of a *muhūrta* (twenty-four minutes) remained of the *dvādaśī* day to expire in which one has to conclude the fast, the king, who was conversant with the religious technicalities, consulted the Brāhmaṇas (as to what righteous course be adopted) in that critical condition (involving conflict of duties).

39. (The king placed his dilemma before the Brāhmaṇas): (On the one hand) there is sin in transgressing a Brāhmaṇa (if I take meals before feeding the invited guest), and (on the other hand) it is sinful not to break a fast during the *dvādaśī* period. (Advise me) what course would be conducive to my good, and unrighteousness should not touch me.

40. I shall conclude the observance of the fast by sipping water only. For taking of water has been declared by Brāhmaṇas as breaking the fast but at the same time it is no eating at all.”¹

41. Coming to this conclusion, the royal sage took in some water, and waited for the return of the Brāhmaṇa contemplating in his mind the Imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu) all the while, Oh best of Kurus.

42. After finishing the necessary religious duties (of the midday), sage Durvāsa returned from the bank of the Yamunā. He was greeted by the king. But he knew by his intellectual (intuitional) power, the action of the king (viz. breaking of the fast by drinking water).

43. With his limbs-quaking through intense wrath, and with his face crooked with knitting of brows (in anger), and being extremely angry, he expostulated the king who stood with folded palms (respectfully).

44. “Oh ! Look at the transgression of the established religious practice committed by this wicked fellow maddened

1. ŚR. quotes Śruti text in support :
apohāli tannaivāśitam naivānaśitam /

with his wealth, who regards himself as God and is devoid of any devotion to Viṣṇu.

45. Having extended an invitation to receive his hospitality to me who came to him as an unexpected guest, he himself took his meals without serving me food. (To the king) I show you forthwith the consequence of your misdeed."

46. Saying these words and extremely flared up with rage, he pulled out a matted hair (from his head), and created out of it a female spirit, (fierce) like the fire at the time of the destruction of the universe (to kill him).

47. Seeing the female evil spirit rushing toward him with a sword in hand, emitting fire, and making the earthquake under her feet (as she advanced), the king did not at all stir from his place.

48. The discus Sudarśana that was previously commissioned for protecting his servant (Ambariṣa) by the Noble-souled Supreme Person, burnt down that evil spirit even as a fire would burn an angry serpent.

49. When Durvāsas saw that all his efforts (against Ambariṣa) became infructuous, and that the discus was advancing towards him, he got frightened and ran in different directions, to save his life.

50. The discus of the Lord closely pursued him even as a forest conflagration with its flames thrown up follows a serpent. Observing it so close behind him, he took to his heels with a desire to enter one of the caves of mount Meru.

51. He fled to different quarters, the sky, the earth, the nether-world, the (seven) seas, to guardian deities of different regions, and to the celestial region. But wheresoever he ran, he saw the Sudarśana of unbearable splendour close on his heels.

52. When he could not find a protector anywhere, he became terrified at heart, and trying to seek asylum, approached god Brahmā appealing to him, "Oh Creator (of the Universe) ! Oh self-born god ! Protect me from the discus of Hari—the unvanquished god.

Brahmā said :

53. At the close of the divine sport (of the creation etc. of the universe), at the end of the period called *dvīparārdha*

(when Brahmā's span of life ends), my own sphere, along with the whole of the Universe shall vanish (come to an end), by mere contraction of the brow of god Viṣṇu, the Soul of the Time-Spirit wishing to burn it all.

54. I, god Śiva, Dakṣa, Bhṛgu and others, and prominent Lords of created beings (*Prajāpatīs*), rulers of goblins and of gods—all of us being subject to his Command, bear on our heads (most respectfully), the divine law for the welfare of the world. (Hence our inability to give you asylum).

55. Being thus refused protection by Brahmā, and being scorched by the discus of Lord Viṣṇu Durvāsas approached god Śiva on mount Kailāsa, for seeking asylum.

Śrī Rudra said :

56.* We cannot prevail against the Supreme Lord, oh child. In that Supreme Ruler great gods like god Brahmā who comprise the universe in their body, are nothing but ordinary *jīvas*; there are thousands of other such Brahmāṇḍas which are born as well as dissolved in the course of time. We are just wandering in transmigration in them.

57-58. I, Sanatkumāra, Nārada, the worshipful god Brahmā, Kapila, the sage Apāntaratamas,¹ Devala, Dharma,

* (i) We are not capable of protecting you against the discus of the Lord Who deserves to be sought after by us. In this universe we who regard ourselves as masters of (our) regions, are wandering (like insects). Thousands of such Brahmāṇḍas appear, when He wills to create, and are dissolved, when He wishes to withdraw—VR.

(ii) We are powerless in affording you protection. At the time of creation numerous deities like me are born from Hari, the Perfect Bliss and are no more at the time of the destruction of the Universe. There are crores of other such Brahmāṇḍas which form the bodies of so many Brahmās in which we and unintelligent beings wander in transmigration. May that Supreme Ruler be your Saviour—Not we—VJ.

(iii) Therefore you seek resort in that Lord Viṣṇu—SD.

(iv) *tāla*—Term of endearment as Durvāsas was a part of ray of god Śiva—GD.

1. A great sage born when god Viṣṇu uttered the word *bhā*. He was absolutely free from the inner darkness or ignorance about the soul. Hence his name is also known as *Sārasvata* as he was born out of the speech (*Sarasvatī*) of the Lord.

—MBH. Śānti 349. 38-39.

Āsuri and other leaders of Siddhas who are perfect in wisdom (have seen the other end) of whom Marīci is prominent, all of us are enveloped in Māyā, and we cannot comprehend hīs Māyā.

59. This is the weapon of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. It is unbearable and irresistible even to us. You seek refuge in Lord Hari. He will make you happy.

60. Being thus disappointed, Durvāsas went to the region of the Lord called Vaikuṇṭha where Lord Viṣṇu abides along with goddess Śrī.

61. Scorched with the fire emanating from the weapon of the unconquerable Lord, he fell trembling at the feet of Viṣṇu and appealed, "Oh Imperishable, Infinite Lord ! You are the goal aspired after by the righteous. Oh Almighty God ! You are the protector of the Universe. Oh Protect me who am an offender.

62. Being ignorant of Your Supreme glory, an offence against your dear one has been committed by me. Be pleased to absolve me of that sin, as even a being in hell is released by uttering Your name (what of wiping out this sin?).

The Lord replied :

63. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! I am completely under the control of my devotees. I am like one who has no self-dependence. My heart is won over and hence is in possession of my righteous devotees, and I am the beloved of them.

64. To my devotees, I am the Supreme goal, (hence) apart from my righteous devotees, I do not covet even my person (myself), or even (my consort) Goddess Śrī¹ who is absolutely faithful to Me.

65. How can I abandon (to their fate) my devotees who have renounced their wives, homes, sons, kith and kin, their very life, property, (their good in) this world and the next, and resorted to me as their protector.

66. These righteous people who have completely dedicated their hearts to me and entertain impartiality of outlook to all, have enthralled me by their devotion, even as good wives do by their devotion to virtuous husbands.

1.—The highest glory of eternal six excellences—VD.

67. So thoroughly satisfied are they in rendering service to me that they do not long for the four types of Liberations such as *Salokatā*—co-residence with the Lord in his region and others¹ which are easily available by my worship. How can they covet for other positions or things which are subject to ravages of time.

68. Righteous people (are so beloved to me that they as if) constitute my heart. I am (reciprocally so much dear to them that I form) their heart. They do not recognize anything beside me. Nor do I know anything else than them.

69. I shall therefore tell you a remedy. Listen to it, Oh Brāhmaṇa. You should verily approach him (Ambariṣa) on account of whom the act of violence has rebounded against you. The energy discharged against pious people boomerangs against and harms its own author.

70. Asceticism and learning are both for the spiritual good of the Brāhmaṇas but those very powers when mishandled by the indisciplined ones produce the contrary results.

71. Hence, Oh Brāhmaṇa ! May good betide you. You go to King Ambariṣa, the son of Nābhāga. Apologize and seek forgiveness of that great king. Then alone you can get peace and relief.

CHAPTER FIVE

Protection of Durvāsas. The story of Ambariṣa Concluded

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Being thus commanded by the glorious Lord, Durvāsas who was afflicted by the discus Sudarśana, returned to Ambariṣa, and sought protection at his feet (by touching them) remorsefully.

1. The remaining three are : *Samīpatā*—Proximity to the Lord, *Sarūpatā*—resemblance in form with the Lord, *Sāyujyatā*—complete identification or absorption in the Deity.

2. Observing the act (of supplication and touching his feet) by Durvāsa, Ambariṣa felt ashamed at the touch of his feet (by the sage), and being overwhelmed with deep compassion, prayed to the missile of Lord Hari.

Ambariṣa prayed :

3. You are the glorious Fire-god, the Sun-god, Soma (or Deity presiding over the moon), the Lord of luminaries (constellations of stars, planets). You are (the elements like) water, the earth, the sky, the air. You are the subtle elements and the senses (or the objects of the senses and fire etc. function due to your power).

4. Oh Sudarśana ! I pay my respects to you who are of thousand spokes and so dear to The Imperishable Lord. You are the destroyer of all missiles, and protector of the earth. May you be propitious to the Brāhmaṇa.

5. You are the righteousness (*dharma*) itself, the Divine Law (*ṛta*) and the Truth (incarnate). You are the sacrifice, and you are the presiding Deity of the Sacrifice who enjoys the oblations. You are the protector of regions, the soul (the Inner Controller) of all; you are the splendour and energy of the Supreme Person.

6. Oh beautifully centred discus ! (Nobody being able to glorify you adequately) I simply utter the word "Bow" to you who are the defender of the injunctions of the Divine Law (ominous and destructive like) a comet unto the unrighteous and the Asuras, the Protector of the three worlds, endowed with purest splendour, of quick speed like the flight of thought and of miraculous deeds.

7. Oh Lord of speech ! By your splendour (constituted) of righteousness, darkness of ignorance obscuring the vision (or the knowledge of the Deity) has been dispelled, and the light (of god-realization) has been flashed and preserved, for the noble-souled righteous people. This entire universe, gross or subtle, high or low has been lighted by you (through the sun, the moon and other luminaries). Your greatness is simply unfathomable.

8. Oh Invincible one !¹ when discharged by the blemi-

1. *ṛ.l. ūrijita* : the (army) of mighty Daityas and Dānavas.

shless Lord, you enter the army of the Daityas and Dānavas and severing (incessantly) their arms, bowels, thighs and feet and necks, you shine irresistible in battles.

9. Oh protector of the world ! You who overcome all (enemies in battle), have been commissioned by the wielder of the mace (Lord Viṣṇu) for the annihilation of the wicked. Therefore, for the sake of the prosperity of our family, be pleased to grant welfare (protection) to the Brāhmaṇa (Durvāsas). That will be your grace unto us (otherwise we shall be responsible for committing the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa)

10. If a charitable gift has been donated (by us), or a sacrifice has been performed, or our righteous duty has been properly executed, or if our family regards Brāhmaṇas as our gods, may this Brāhmaṇa be free from his distress.

11. If the glorious lord, the sole abode of all excellent qualities be pleased with us due to our looking upon (regarding) all beings as possessing souls like us (or his Spirit), may this Brāhmaṇa get rid of his distress and anxiety.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. While the king was thus praying to Viṣṇu's discus Sudarśana, which was scorching the Brāhmaṇa on all sides, it subsided at the request of the king.

13. Being relieved of the scorching heat of the fire of the missile (Sudarśana), Durvāsas felt comfortable. Bestowing on him the highest blessings, he praised the king.

Durvāsas said :

14. "Oh ! How wonderful ! I have witnessed today the magnanimity of servants of the Infinite Lord in that you wish for the well-being of a person who has offended you, Oh king.

15. What is difficult to be achieved for those righteous persons or what is impossible to give up in the case of those noble-souled persons, who have treasured up (and made their own) the glorious Lord Hari, the leader of the Sātvatas.

16. Can there be any deficiency or unfulfilment in the case of the servants of the Lord of the hallowing feet (to which

even holy rivers resort for purification) by listening to the name of whom a man is absolved of all sins and impurities.

17. Oh King ! I am highly favoured by you in that, exceedingly merciful as you are, you ignored the wrong done by me, and have completely saved my life."

18. The king who did not take any food but waited in expectation of the sage's return, clasped his feet, conciliated him, and made him accept the meal.

19. Having enjoyed the hospitality and the food that was suitable to all tastes and (thus) gratifying all desires) and was served with respect and care, he felt himself thoroughly gratified, and courteously requested the king to take his meals.

20. "I am thoroughly pleased with you, and have been laid under great obligations by the sight, touch, conversation as well as by the hospitality-offered with full devotion to the Lord—of a great votary of the Lord (like you).

21. The celestial damsels will often sing of this noble behaviour (act) of yours (in heaven), and this earth (the whole world) will extol this highly hallowing glory of yours."

Śrī Śuka said :

22. Having thus praised the king, Durvāsa who was highly satisfied, took his leave of him and through ethereal space went to the region of Brahmā¹ which lasts for two *Parārdha* years.¹

23. A complete year elapsed since the departed sage Durvāsa did not return. It is reported that during this period, the king who longed to see him returned, subsisted simply on water.

24. After the departure of Durvāsa, Ambariṣa ate the (remnant of the) food that was rendered extremely holy by being partaken of by the Brāhmaṇa (Durvāsa). Pondering over the calamity on Durvāsa and his final release and his own fortitude, he considered all that being due to the power of the Supreme Person.

25. The king Ambariṣa who was thus endowed with such enumerable excellent qualities, continued in his devotion

1. *ahaitukam*—where dry rationalists have no place—GS.

of the Lord by dedicating all his acts suitable to his own caste and stage of life to the Supreme Soul, Brahman designated as Vāsudeva. By virtue of such (firm) devotion, he came to regard all positions upto the part of god Brahmā as hellish.

26. In course of time, Ambarīṣa entrusted his kingdom to his sons whose disposition and character were similar to him, and entered the forest. Concentrating his mind wholly on Vāsudeva, his own soul, he destroyed (became free from) the current of guṇas viz. *Samsāra* or transmigration of the soul.

27. He who glorifies this sacred story of king Ambarīṣa or ponders over it, becomes a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu.

27A. Those who listen to the story of the noble-souled Ambarīṣa, all of them attain to Liberation from *Samsāra* through the devotion to and by the Grace of Lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SIX

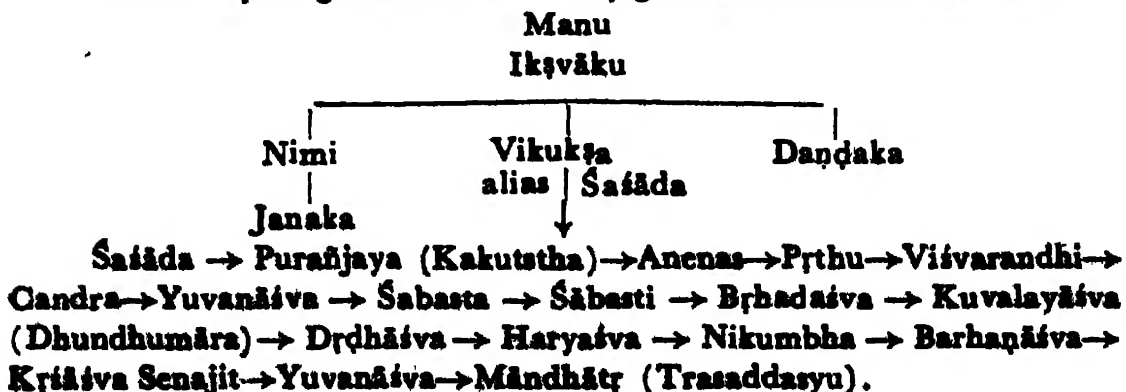
*History of Ikṣvāku's Posterity**

The Story of Saubhari

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Virūpa, Ketumān and Śambhu were the three sons of Ambarīṣa. From Virūpa was born Pṛṣadaśva whose son was Rathītara.

*This chapter gives the first twenty generations of the Solar race :



2. When requested for the continuation of the family of Rathītara, Aṅgiras begot by the wife of Rathītara who was childless, a number of sons, possessing the lustre of the Vedic lore.

3. Though these were born from the wife of Rathītara, they were known as belonging to the family of Aṅgiras (instead of that of Rathītara); they became the leaders of other sons of Rathītara as they were Brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristic qualities of Kṣātrīyas.

4. While Manu was sneezing his son Ikṣvāku was born from his nostrils. Of the hundred sons of Ikṣvāku, Vikukṣi, Nimi and Daṇḍaka were the eldest.

5. Of these one hundred sons, twentyfive became monarchs in (the principalities lying in) the east of Āryāvarta¹, twentyfive became rulers in the West (of Āryāvarta), three in the middle (of that tract), and the rest in other directions (north, south and other directions).

6. Once, on the occasion of *aṣṭaka-Śrāddha*² Ikṣvāku ordered his son, “Oh Vikukṣi ! Hurry up and bring meat suitable for the purpose of *Śrāddha*. Don’t delay, please.”

7. Saying ‘Be it so’ (in compliance of his father’s order), the hero went to the forest, and killed beasts suitable for religious rites. Being fatigued and hungry, he unwittingly ate a hare.

8. He brought the remaining flesh to his father. When Ikṣvāku requested the family preceptor (Vasiṣṭha) to sprinkle it with water, he refused saying that it was contaminated, and hence unsuitable for religious rites.

9. Having ascertained from his son the perpetration of the (sacrilegious) act as reported by his family preceptor the king, out of anger, exiled from his land, his son who violated the restrictions of the rite.

1. The sacred land between the Vindhya and the Himālayas—ŚR.

2. (A *Śrāddha* to be performed on the seventh, eighth, ninth and the thirteenth day of dark and bright halves of the lunar months).

GS quotes :

saptamyādi-trayaṃ caiva tathā caiva trayodaśī !

catasras tvaṣṭakāḥ proktāḥ sarvapakṣād viśepataḥ !!

10. The king discussed with his preceptor Vasiṣṭha about the nature of the Truth. As a consequence of it, Ikṣvāku became established in *Jñāna-yoga* (path of knowledge). And casting off this physical body, he attained to what was the highest (*Brahman*).

11. Vikukṣi who came to be known as Śasāda (the eater of a hare) returned after the demise of his father, and while ruling over the earth, he worshipped Lord Hari with (the performance) of sacrifices.

12. His son Purañjaya (conqueror of a city) was called Indravāha (one borne by Indra), and was also named as *Kakutsi* (one seated on the hump of a bull). Now listen to (what) deeds earned for him these designations.

13. At the end of the Kṛta Age (or at the beginning of the Tretā age)¹, there was a battle between gods and Dānavas—a battle that was fierce like the *Pralaya*, at the end of world. This hero (Purañjaya) was sought as an ally by gods who were defeated by Daityas.

14. ('I shall kill the demons if Indra agrees to be my mount' on this condition) Indra was sought to be a mount. According to the advice of Lord Viṣṇu, the god of gods and the soul of the universe, Indra assumed the form of a big bull (to carry Purañjaya).

15. Accoutered in a coat of mail and armed with a celestial bow and sharp arrows, he, being eager to fight, mounted the bull and occupied his seat on its hump, while he was being extolled by gods.

16. Strengthened with the spiritual energy of Lord Viṣṇu, the Inner Controller, the Supreme Soul, he besieged the town of the Daityas in the west, with the army of gods.

17. He engaged them in a fierce battle which made hair stand on end. Whosoever of the Daityas dared to face in the battle, he despatched them to the god of death with his *bhalla* arrows.

18. While the Daityas were being killed, they avoided the range of the flight of his arrows which were unbearable

1. *Kṛtānta* — Both the meanings of the pun on *Kṛtānta* are accepted.

like the fire that consumes the universe at the end of *yugas* and fled to their region (the subterranean world).

19. Having conquered the splendid city and all its wealth, the royal sage gave it all to Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt. Hence he was designated with the epithets (mentioned above).

20. Purañjaya had a son called Anenas (the sinless). His son was Pṛthu whose son was Viśvarandhi (v. l. Viśvagan-dha) His son was Candra whose son was Yuvanāśva.

21. His son was Śābasta who built the city called Śābasti. Bṛhadaśva was the son of Śābasta; thence (the next generation) was Kuvalayāśva.

22. For achieving the well-being of sage Utañka, the powerful king, surrounded by his twentyone thousand sons, killed the demon called Dhundhu.

23. He, thereby, became celebrated as Dhundhumāra. All of his sons except the three who survived, were burnt by the fire that emanated from the mouth of Dhundhu.

24. The surviving sons were Dṛdhāśva, Kapilāśva and Bhadrāśva, Oh descendant of Bharata. Dṛdhāśva's son was Haryaśva whose son is remembered at Nikumbha.

25-26. Barhaṇāśva was the son of Nikumbha. His (Barhaṇāśva's) son was Kṛśāśva whose son was Senajit. To him was born Yuvanāśva who, being childless, repaired to the forest, along with his hundred wives, in despair. The merciful sages took pity on him, and with great concentration of mind, they conducted for him a sacrifice, specially dedicated to Indra.

27. (Once) being thirsty at night, the king entered the sacrificial hall. Finding all the Brāhmaṇas in the hall asleep, he himself drank the water consecrated with *mantras* (and meant for the queen).

28. On getting up (at dawn), the Brāhmaṇas found the pitcher of (consecrated) water empty. Then, Oh king, they enquired whose work it was that the water meant for begetting a male issue, was drunk.

29. Then, having come to know that it was drunk by the king who was (as if) impelled by God, they bowed down to the Almighty Lord (with the words) "The power of the Providence is really Supreme and irresistible".

30. It is reported that after the expiry of the due period (of nine months), the son of Yuvanāśva who (later) became the sovereign monarch of the globe of the earth, was born splitting open the right side of his belly.

31. 'The child is incessantly crying¹. Whom will it suck?' (asked the Brāhmaṇas anxiously 'He will suckle me. Oh child, do not cry; saying this, Indra (who was propitiated with a sacrifice for its birth) put (in his mouth) his index finger (which was dripping with nectar.)

32. Through the grace of gods and that of Brāhmaṇas, his (Māndhātṛ's) father did not die. Yuvanāśva attained to the Final Beatitude, there (in that very hermitage) through his penance.

33. Indra gave him *Trasad-dasyu* (The terror of evil-doers) as another epithet. For enemies of gods and men like Rāvaṇa and others trembled at the mention of his name and were perturbed.

34. In due course, Māndhātā, the son of Yuvanāśva became the universal monarch, and being infused with the Spiritual power and glory of the Imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu), solely ruled over the world consisting of seven island-continents.

35. A knower of the Self as he was, he performed a number of sacrifices with liberal gifts and *dakṣiṇās*, and thereby worshipped the Supreme Deity of the sacrifices, the Lord who represents all gods (in his person) and who, through his being the inner Controller of all *antaryāmins* is beyond the ken of senses.

36. Materials of sacrifices, *mantras* (recited in the course of the sacrifice), the sacrificial procedure, the sacrifice proper, the performer of sacrifice and priests participating in the sacrifice, the merit accruing from the sacrifice, time and place of sacrifice—all these are his constituents. (In fact, the whole of the universe is constituted of him. Him he worshipped through sacrifices.

37. The point at which the sun rises, to the point where it sets—the whole of the region lighted by the sun is

1. The child which wishes to suck the breast of his mother is incessantly crying—VJ.

regarded as the land (kingdom) of Māndhātṛ, the son of Yuvanāśva.

38. The king begot on Bindumatī, the daughter of Śaśabindu, (three sons, viz.) Purukutsa, Ambarīṣa and Mukunda, the yogin. Their fifty sisters sought the sage Saubhari¹ as their husband.

39-40. Submerged in the waters of the Yamunā, and practising austere penance, Saubhari happened to observe the happy state of the king of fishes engaged in coition (with a female partner), and he was affected with that passionate desire, and (approaching the king) requested him for a girl. (The king) replied, "Oh Brahman, you can freely have any daughter, provided she selects you of her own accord voluntarily.

41. The sage realized the ruse and said to himself, 'Considering that I, being far advanced in age, grey-haired, covered with wrinkles, with a head unstable and shaking (all the while), will be repulsive and disagreeable to women, I have been (politely) refused by the king.

42. I shall make myself so (attractively) beautiful that I shall be covetable even to celestial nymphs; not to speak of daughters of lords of human beings. The spiritual master (Saubhari) became thus determined (and by his power of asceticism, he became so actually).

43. He was ushered in by the chamberlain, in the richly magnificent and luxurious harem reserved for the princesses. And Lo! That one suitor was sought after and courted as a husband by all the fifty princesses.

44. Throwing to winds (forgetting) their mutual sisterly affection, there arose a great controversy among them about securing him (as a husband). Their hearts being fixed upon him, each one of them argued, "He is suitable in beauty and form only to me, and not to anyone of you (at all)".

45-46. Saubhari, well-versed in the *Rgveda* (and master of powerful *mantras*) enjoyed for a long period his life with

1. *Saubhari*—The story, how the old sage Śaumbhari married all the fifty daughters of the emperor Māndhātṛ seems to be popular in the epic period, and is found in *Viṣṇu P.* 4.2.3, *Garuḍa P.* 1.138. In fact the whole of that chapter seems to be based on this chapter of the Bh.P.

them (the princesses of Māndhātṛ) in mansions furnished by the power of his inexhaustible penance, with invaluable paraphernalia and furnishings such as highly costly beds, seats, rich clothes, ornaments, baths, articles of beautifications (pigments etc.), sweet dishes, wreaths and flowers, waited upon by men and women adorned with precious ornaments, and resonant with warbling birds, humming bees and singing panegyrists. He revelled with them delightfully in various gardens studded with pools of translucent waters, and in parks full of scented flowers (like Kalhāra).

47. Observing his affluent state of house-holder's life, Māndhātā, the master of the entire earth consisting of seven island-continents, was so astonished that he ceased to feel the obstinate pride of universal sovereignty.

48. Although he was enjoying various objects of pleasure with deep attachment to his houses which were full of various kinds of pleasure¹, Saubhari did not feel sated like a fire fed with drops of ghee.

49. On one occasion, while he was sitting (all alone), Saubhari, the great preceptor of *R̥gveda*, became conscious of his ascetic degeneration (spiritual oblivion) caused by his observation of the sexual pleasure of the fish.

50. 'Alas ! Look at the ruinous fall of mine—an ascetic of pious conduct, conforming strictly to vows, due to my noticing (the sexual intercourse of) the aquatic animals, under waters, my asceticism² which I observed for a long time, was lost.'

51. A person desirous of liberation from *Samsāra*, should, with all his heart and soul, avoid association with all who follow married life. He should endeavour not to permit his senses to external objects. Leading a life in solitude, he should fix his mind on the Infinite Ruler (of the universe). If occasion arises, he should associate himself with saintly persons who observe vows (of celibacy etc.) and are devoted to the Lord.

1. VR. reads *nānd-mukhaḥ* : 'Through many sets of senseorgans'.
assumed various bodies simultaneously to enjoy through multiple-sets of senseorgans, all the objects of pleasure fully.

2. *brahma*—*Brahman*, the Supreme Spirit I used to meditate upon for a long time past, was completely forgotten—VR.

52. I was an ascetic without any companion. But due to my association with the fish under water, I became fifty (by marrying fifty wives¹). (By procreating hundred sons per wife) I became five thousand. I cannot reach the end of desires about them, or I do not see any limit to my wishes relating to man and wife, or this world and the next. I have lost my judgment due to the *guṇas* of *Māyā*. I have come to believe that achievement of worldly objects are the real goal in life.

53. Continuing in the householder's stage of life for some (more) time, he felt disinclination (to that life), and adopted the life of a *Vānaprastha* (*nyāsa*). He repaired to the forest and was followed by his fifty wives who looked upon their husband as God.

54. The self-controlled sage performed there a severely austere penance which reduced his body (to a skeleton), and got absorbed along with the fires (like *gārhapatya*) into the Supreme Soul (and was liberated from *samsāra*).

55. Noticing the absorption of their husband in the Supreme Brahman, his wives too followed him through his spiritual power (and attained Liberation from *Samsāra*) just as flames become extinguished with a subsided fire.²

CHAPTER SEVEN³

The Story of King Hariscandra³

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The celebrated Ambariṣa, who was the most excellent son of Māndhātṛ, was adopted as his son by his grandfather.

1. GS : I assumed fifty forms for simultaneous association with fifty wives.

2. VJ's Text does not end this chapter here.

3. This chapter deals with the following generations of Kings of the Solar race :

Māndhātṛ (mentioned in the last ch.) → Purukutsa → Trasaddasyu II → Anarāya → Haryaśva → Aruṇa → Tribandhana → Satyavrata alias Trisanku → Hariscandra → Rohita

This line is confirmed in the VP. 4.3.

The rivalry between Vasiṣṭhas and Viśvāmitras is as old as the *Rigveda*. Here the story is based on the famous *Śunaḥśepa* legend in the

(Yuvanāśva). His (Ambarīṣa's) son was Yauvanāśva whose son was Hārīta. These are the three important members (and the first three branches of the Māndhātṛ family).

2. Narmadā (a Nāga princess) was given by her Nāga brothers to Purukutsa (the eldest son of Māndhātṛ). As directed by the serpent-King (Vāsuki), she took him (Purukutsa) to the nether-world called *Rasātala*.

3. Infused with the spiritual energy of god Viṣṇu, Purukutsa killed Gandharvas who deserved to be slain. He received a boon from the Nāgas that those who remember this story (of emancipation of Nāgas from Gandharvas) would be immune from the fear of serpents.

4. Purukutsa's son was Trasaddasyu (the second¹) who was the father of Anarāṇya. His son was Haryaśva whose son was Aruṇa. Aruṇa's son was Tribandhana.

5-6. Tribandhana's son Satyavrata became celebrated as Triśaṅku.² He was reduced to the status of a Cāṇḍāla by the curse of his father, but by dint of the spiritual power of Viśvāmitra, he ascended heaven along with his (physical) body, where he is still seen in the sky. When he was made to fall with his head downward by gods, he (Viśvāmitra) stopped him in the mid-air by the spiritual force (of Viśvāmitra).

7. Triśaṅku's son was Hariścandra on account of whom³ a continuous fight lasting for many years took place

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. The way in which this Hariścandra treated Varuṇa is different from that of the Hariścandra who sold himself to keep his promise to Viśvāmitra. Two contradictory legends are grafted on the same Hariścandra ! The MBH and VP. corroborate the 'Triśaṅku' legend!

1. 'Trasad-dasyu' is the name of Māndhātṛ also. Vide supra. 9.6.33

2. ŚR. explains: He is called Triśaṅku—one in whom are embedded three darts in the form of three offences, viz. abduction of a Brāhmaṇa girl from her marriage pandal, killing the cow of his preceptor Vasiṣṭha, eating meat before its consecration with water. He quotes a verse from the *Harivamśa* enumerating these transgressions :

*pitṛ ca'paritoṣṇa gururdogdhrivadhana ca /
aprokṣitopayogācca trividhas te vyatikramah //*

3. This refers to the persecution of Hariścandra by the sage Viśvāmitra who deprived Hariścandra of everything as a sacrificial fee for conducting a Rājasūya sacrifice. When Vasiṣṭha learnt of this, he cursed Viśvāmitra to be a crane (*āḍi*) while Viśvāmitra retaliated by imprecating him to be a heron (*baka*). They fought for years in these forms—ŚR.

between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra in the form of birds (viz. a crane (āḍī, Viśvāmitra) and a heron (Vasiṣṭha)).

8. He (Hariścandra) being issueless became dejected in mind. On the advice of Nārada, he resorted to god Varuṇa with the request, "Oh Varuṇa, Bless me with a son.

9. "If he grows to be a warrior, I shall worship you by sacrificing him to you". 'Be it so', replied Varuṇa in granting him the boon. And a son called Rohita was born to him, through the grace of Varuṇa.

10. Varuṇa demanded, "Now a son is born to you, worship me by sacrificing that child". Hariścandra replied, "When a (prospective) victim crosses the first ten days of his life, it becomes fit for sacrificial purpose."

11. When the time limit of ten days was over, Varuṇa arrived and asked the king to worship him (with that child). Hariścandra replied, "It is after dentition that an animal becomes fit for sacrifice."

12. "(After the dentition of the child, Varuṇa appeared again and) said, "Now that the teeth have appeared, do you worship me with the child?" "But the victim will be fit for sacrifice when its teeth have fallen."

13. (Varuṇa appeared again and (demanded, "The teeth of the sacrificial animal have fallen, now worship (me with him)". "But a victim becomes pure when its teeth grow again." replied Hariścandra.

14. "Now that (the teeth) have grown again, sacrifice it now to me", said Varuṇa. To him replied Hariścandra, "Oh King ! When a Kṣatriya victim is (of the age of) wearing an armour, he is regarded as a pure animal fit for sacrifice."

15. In this way due to affection for his son and with his mind overpowered with (paternal) love, he went on deceiving by postponements (of sacrifice), and the god waited.

16. Rohita who, by then, came to know what (type of) act his father intended to do, and desirous of saving his life, escaped to the forest with a bow in hand.

17. Having come to learn that his father is possessed by Varuṇa and has developed *mahodara* (a disease called 'Dropsy'), Rohita was returning to the capital when Indra forbade him to do so (lest he should be sacrificed).

18. Indra advised Rohita to travel all over the earth, as visiting the holy places and ablutions in sacred waters are meritorious, and Rohita stayed in the forest that year.

19. Assuming the form of an old Brāhmaṇa, Indra visited him in the second, third, fourth and fifth year and tendered him the same advice.

20. Having wandered in the forest for the sixth year, Rohita returned to his capital (and on way) purchased the middle son (the second son by name Śunaḥśepa) from Ajigarta (of the Bhr̥gu clan).

21-23. Handing over Śunaḥśepa as a sacrificial animal to his father, Rohita bowed down to him. King Hariścandra of great glory, worshipped Varuṇa and other gods with human sacrifice and became free from dropsy, and his stories came to be sung in the assemblies of the great. In that sacrifice Viśvāmitra was the high priest (*hotṛ*), the self-controlled (or one who has realized the self), Jamadagni officiated as *adhvaryu*, Vasiṣṭha became the Brahmā, and the sage Ayāśya sang the Sāman hymns. Being pleased with him, Indra gifted to him a gold chariot.

24-25A. The greatness of Śunaḥśepa will be recounted later on (in ch. 16). Being highly pleased to notice the resoluteness deriving its strength from firmness in truth of both the king and the queen, he (Viśvāmitra) imparted to them the unobstructed knowledge of the ultimate truth.

25B-27*. (In meditation) fusing his mind (the root-

* The gists of the explanations of different commentators are as follows :

(1) VR. : Hariścandra in his meditation identified the mind with the earth and the earth with water . . . so on up to *Tāmasic* Ego into *Pradhāna* which contains *Mahat* in itself. Having contemplated the Intelligent principle in it (i.e. by contemplating the *pratyagātman* as being characterised by devotion-cum-knowledge — *upāsānātmaka-vidyā-viśiṣṭam pratyagātmānam anusandhāya ityarthah*), and burning down by that knowledge the wrong notions of the identification of the body with the soul, absolute independence of *ātman* (*svatantrātmā'bhimāna-rūpam*), and discarding it by realising the limitations of that aspect of devotion-cum-knowledge, and becoming free from the bondage of *karmas* (merits and sins), he realised his blissful nature of the soul which is beyond description (either as a man or a god or a sub-human being etc. or in usual terms of name and form), stayed in his own essential nature (transcend sin etc.).

cause of *Samsāra*¹) into the earth (which is another designation for food which constitutes and hence modifies the mind²), the earth into water, water into fire, fire into the air, the air into ether or space, and that into the Tāmasic aspect of Ego (which is the source of all elements), the *Tāmasic* ego into the *mahat* (the principle of cosmic intelligence), but of the intellectual and objective aspects of the *Ātman*, he contemplated the intellectual or knowledge aspect into the *Mahat* ignoring the objective aspect, and thereby burnt down completely the Nescience (that obscured the soul). Through his intelligent consciousness of the absolute bliss of *Nirvāṇa*, he transcended that aspect also, and completely severed off the bondage (such as identification of the soul with the body), and stood in his own essential nature which is beyond the range of description and abstract reasoning.

(II) VJ : Agreeing with ŚR about the procedure of merging of the mind into the earth etc. upto *Mahat* which is presided over by the four-faced god *Brahmā*, wherein lies the Intelligent principle of which the presiding deity is *Sarasvatī*; contemplating over this and destroying all the bondages, he stayed in his natural stage of knowledge and blissfulness which is beyond my i.e. human power of description or reasoning capacity.

(III) SD : The fickleness of the mind depends on the food eaten. Thus the mind being identical with the food which grows out of the earth and hence one with it for the control of the mind, he meditated it as identical with the earth. This procedure goes upto *Mahadātman* : but SD states *mahadātman* means *Pradhāna* which is the soul or cause of *Mahat*. *Jñānakalā*=*Buddhi*, 'Intelligence'. Though it is *jaḍa* (unconscious), it is associated with the knower i.e. *Jīva* and hence called *Jñānakalā*. Contemplating over the distinction between *jīvātman* and *buddhi* and burning down (dispelling) the ignorance i.e. the false identification of the soul with body, mind, intelligence etc., and thus discarding intelligence and distinguishing *Pradhāna* from the self, he became liberated from bondage of *karmas*.

(IV) BP. takes *jñānakalā* as the power of knowledge of *jīva* (*jñāna-śabda-vācya-jīvasya vidyā-śakti* / Hence—*upāsanāvisiṣṭa-pratyagātma*).

1. *mano-mūlo hi samsārah* ! Śruti text quoted by ŚR and GS.

2. *anna-mayaṁ he saumya manṇḥ* ! —*Chāndogya* up. 6.6.5 6.7.6.

— quoted by commentators.

CHAPTER EIGHT¹*The Story of King Sagara*²

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Harita was the son of Rohita; from Harita was born Campa who built up the city of Campā.³ Campa's son was Sudeva whose son was Vijaya.

2. Vijaya's son was Bharuka (Bhiruka, Ruruka in other *purāṇas*). From him was born Vṛka whose son was Bāhuka. This king, being deprived of his kingdom by his enemies, repaired to the forest along with his wife.

3. When the queen was about to immolate herself in fire along with the (body of the) old king who died, she was prevented (from ascending the funeral pyre) by sage Aurva who knew about her pregnancy.

4. Having come to know of this (her pregnancy), she was administered poison (mixed) with food by her co-wives (to kill her alongwith the child). But he (the son) was born along with it (poison). Hence, this highly glorious son was named *Sa-gara* (born with poison).

1. This chapter deals with the following rulers of the solar race in a chronological order :

Rohita (mentioned in ch.7)→Harita→Campa (also known as *Cañcu* in *Vāyu* P. 3.88.119 and other *purāṇas*)→Sudeva→Vijaya→Bharuka→(also called Ruruka, Karuka, Bhiruka in other *purāṇas*)→Vṛka→Bāhuka→Sagara→(Asamañjasa→*Aṁsumān* mentioned only). The *Matsya* group of *Purāṇas* (viz. *Matsya*, *Padma* and *Agni*) drop all kings between Rohita and Vṛka, possibly being unimportant.

2. The Sagar legend is very popular with all the *purāṇas*, vide *Vāyu* 3.88.123-167, *Brahmāṇḍa* III. chs 47-55, *Matsya* briefly in 12.39-43, *Śiva-Umā Samhitā*. 38.29-57, and Textual similarity (including repetition of identical verses) in three different groups of *purāṇas* leads one to assume a common source which though not extant now, can be reconstructed.

3. A site at a distance of four miles to the west of Bhagalpur. It was the capital of Aṅga, of which Karna was the King at the time of MBH. Even then, it was a place of pilgrimage (*MBH. Vana* 85, 14-15). It is full of ancient Buddhist and Jain relics as it was sacred to both the sects due to the association of the founders of their sects and other famous teachers of their sects. The Chānd Śadāgar and Behulā episode is supposed to have happened here and a fair in honour of Behulā is held here.

5A. Sagara became a universal monarch. It is his sons who excavated the sea (and hence it became known after them as *Sāgara*).

5B to 7A. He conquered Tālajaṅghas¹, Yavanas², Śakas³, Haihayas⁴ and Barbaras⁵, but to honour the promise given by his preceptor Aurva, he did not massacre them, but caused them to wear loathsome dress and appearance; some were got clean-shaven; some were left with beards and moustaches only (with no hair on the head); some had only hair on the head (but with clean-shaven face); some had only half-shaven heads; some were made to remove the undergarment, while others, of the upper garment⁶.

7B & 8. In accordance with the guidance in *yoga* given by Aurva, he (sagara) worshipped by horse-sacrifices Lord Hari, the very Soul of all Vedas and of gods, who was his own self and the Supreme Ruler. God Indra stole away the sacrificial animal (the horse consecrated for sacrifice), and let free (to wander all over the earth).

9. In compliance of their father's command, the proud sons of (Sagara's queen) Sumati, excavated the earth on all sides, in search of the horse.

1. A famous *Kṣatriya* clan known after its founding father Tālajaṅgha, a descendant of Śaryāti—*MBH. Anu* 30.7 also *Vana* 106.8

It was one of the five clans of Haihayas.

2. The Ionians; the Indo-Greeks who settled in the former NWF. provinces and the adjoining parts.

3. Śakas or Scythians came from the valleys of the Oxus and the Jaxartes and they conquered a part of Western India and settled there.

4. Haihayas were a branch of the Yādava clan. They ruled at Māhiṣmatī, near modern Māndhatā in Nimar District M.P., on the Narmadā.

5. D.C. Sircar identifies these as a people of the country called Varvara or Barbara which lay in the lower valley of the Indus, where the city of Barbara was probably founded by Alexander. Sircar rejects S. Levi's identification with Barbaria of the *Periplus*, the Coast of Somali on the Gulf of Aden. (*SGAMI* p. 233). The close association of Śakas and Barbaras in *Purāṇas* suggests their geographical proximity, which rules out S. Levi's suggestion of its location in Africa.

6. This is an explanation of the fashions of dress and hair-cut of these extra-Indian tribes, whose war-like qualities (*Kṣatriyatva*) are tacitly admitted, but are relegated to non-Indian status.

10-11. They saw the horse in the north-eastern direction near the sage Kapila. "Here is the thief, the horse-lifter, who sits with his eyes closed. Let this wicked fellow be killed forthwith." Shouting thus, those sixty thousand (sons of Sagara) with their arms lifted, attacked him when the sage opened his eyes.

12. (Firstly) Being deprived of their good sense through the deceptive influence of Indra and now being (as good as) dead through the transgression (insult) committed by them against a great personage (like the sage Kapila), they were reduced to ashes in a moment by the fire that emanated from their own bodies.¹

13. It is not correct to say that the sons of the emperor were burnt down through the wrath of the sage (Kapila). How can *Tamas* in the form of anger be imagined in the case of that sage who was abode of pure *Sattva* (undiluted by *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and whose person purified the whole universe? It is as impossible as the sticking of the particles of the earthly dust to the sky.

14. It is his promulgation in the form of *Sāṅkhya* system of philosophy, which serves here as a strong and safe boat by means of which a person desirous of Liberation (from *Samsāra*) crosses this sea in the form of *Samsāra* which is so difficult to cross, and is a road (destined) to death. How can there exist at all the sense of difference (as between a friend or a foe) in the omniscient sage who is no other than the Supreme Lord?

15. He who is (wrongly) called Asamañjasa ('unreasonable' but was actually very reasonable and virtuous) was the son of the king (Sagara) born of his queen Keśinī. His son named Amśumān engaged himself in achieving his grandfather's interest.

16. Asamañjasa showed himself outwardly as being unreasonable. He was in his former birth a *yogī* who deviated from his *yogic* path on account of evil association, and was born now with the recollection of the past life. (He dissociated himself from all).

1. According to *Śiva P. Urd-saṁhitā* 38.53-54. only four sons, viz. Harṣaketu, Suketu, Dharmaratha and Pañcajana were spared.

17. He used to behave in a manner censured (by people) in this world, and committed acts unliked by his kith and kin. (For example) he hurled children in the Śarayu while they were playing and thus harassed the public.

18. As he conducted himself in this way, he was abandoned (transported beyond his kingdom) setting aside his parental affection. By his yogic power he showed them all the children alive and then he departed (from Ayodhyā).

19. Having seen all the children returned alive, hale and hearty, the citizens of Ayodhyā were astonished Oh King ! But king Sagara was however, filled with remorse.

20. Amśumān, being commanded by the king to find out the sacrificial horse, went along the path dug out by his uncles and perceived the horse near a heap of ashes.

21. Seeing there Lord Viṣṇu in the form of a sage named Kapila, sitting nearby, Amśumān folding his palms and bowing down respectfully, prayed him with concentrated mind.

Amśumān prayed :

22*. Neither through his concentration of mind in spiritual meditation nor through his capacity of abstract reasoning could Brahmā, even to this day, either perceive you or comprehend you as being transcendental to himself.¹ How is it possible for others like us, who belong to different species

* (i) VR.: Not even *yogins* can clearly realize, even to this day, the essentially true nature of you, the Supreme Soul, in spite of their attempts through concentration of mind in spiritual meditation or through their reasoning capacity. How can other persons like us who are not *yogins* but are creations of *Hiranya-garbha* (god Brahmā) and others, who, in their turn, are products of your mind, body, intellect, comprehend your true nature.

(ii) VJ.: The unborn god Viriñci (Brahmā) could not, to this day, perceive you to be a part or ray (*amśa*) of the Supreme Soul. Due to your infinite nature, he cannot correctly comprehend you directly or indirectly through his power of mental concentration in spiritual meditation. How can others—other than Viriñci—who are devoid of meditational power and reasoning capacity, comprehend you ? For these derive their knowledge through their sense-organs which are presided over by Marici and other Lords of creations, who, in their turn, are the products of Viriñci's body and mind.

1. *ātmanah param*—Brahmā's predecessor, father, Lord Viṣṇu.

of beings (such as gods, sub-human beings and human beings), and who, being later creations from his mind, body and intellect (and as such are the products of *Sattva*, *Tamas* and *Rajas*), are devoid of the light (of spiritual wisdom), to realize or comprehend you.

23*. The embodied beings¹ (such as gods, men) whose understanding is deluded by your *Māyā* and who, being dominated by the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) can cognise (lit. get light of wisdom on) external objects only, do not know you, (even though you) abide in them (as their Soul, the Indwelling controller). What they perceive are only products of *guṇas*, the objects of senses, while they are in the waking and dreaming states, and utter darkness (total ignorance), when (immersed) in deep sleep.

24. How can an ignorant person like me reflect upon you who are an embodiment of knowledge (and hence not an object of knowledge), and capable of being contemplated only by sages like Sanandana who have by their power (or since their very inception) destroyed the *guṇas* of *Māyā*, and the resultant notion of difference and delusion.

25.** We salute to you, the Ancient-most Eternal Person Whose assumption of the (present) body is for the sake of

*(i) VR. : The corporeal beings, being under the dominance of three *guṇas*, see i.e. brood over *guṇas* or objects of senses, or perceive the body which is the product of *tamas* i.e. *pradhāna*, but not the indwelling soul, as they can cognise external objects only.

(ii) VJ. : The embodied beings are classified according to the dominance of three *guṇas* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Out of them, human beings, being dominated by *rajas*, are intent on the first three objectives of human life (*dharma*, *artha*, *Kāma*) and hence perceive objects of senses, and are not interested in *Mokṣa*. The *Asuras* are dominated by *Tamas*, and have their minds deluded by *Māyā*, the binding power of *Hari*, and they see, i.e. experience the blinding darkness of hell. These are ignorant about their soul, and do not perceive Lord *Viṣṇu* who dwells in them.

1. *dehabhājāḥ*—Gods, men etc. who identify their bodies with the Soul—GD.

**VJ. : Who are not affected by the *guṇas* of *Māyā* (e.g. *Sattva*) and are devoid of *Karmas* and the material body (evolved out of *guṇas*); who are different from Brahman (*sat*) and material atoms (*asat*); your assumption of the body being for showering grace on the people (by imparting knowledge) and not as a result of *karmas*. Hence, you are above miseries.

imparting spiritual wisdom, but Who, (as a matter of fact), are absolutely free from (the laws of) cause and effect or from merits and demerits, and are devoid of (material) body, actions (*karmas*), name and form which are the products of the *guṇas* of Māyā, Oh Serene Sage.¹

26. In this world, a creation of your Illusive Power (Māyā), people whose intellect is deluded by their being steeped in lust, greed, envy and infatuation, presume that houses and other objects of senses are real and wander in *Samsāra*.

27. Oh glorious Lord ! The very Soul of all beings ! Today, simply by seeing (meeting) you, the strong bondage (lit. cord) of our delusion (in identification of the body with the Soul), which is the root-cause of our desires (for objects of pleasure), actions (striving for securing them), the sense-organs (the tools of such actions), is cut asunder.

Śrī Śuka said :

28. The illustrious sage Kapila whose glory was thus eulogised, blessed Amśumān mentally, and addressed to him as follows, Oh King.

The glorious sage (Kapila) said :

29. "Oh child ! This is the horse, the (consecrated) sacrificial beast of your grand-father. It may (now) be taken away (by you). These are your forebears who are reduced to ashes, and deserve (need) to be purified by the waters of the Gaṅgā and by nothing else."

30. Amśumān circumambulated Kapila, and securing his grace by bowing him down with his head, brought the sacrificial horse. Sagara completed the remaining part of the sacrifice with that (consecrated) animal.

31. Having entrusted the kingdom to Amśumān, Sagara who became free from all cravings and from bond of attach-

1. OR (1) Oh Sage, who have subdued Māyā and have been devoid of *guṇas*.

(2) Oh Sage in whom Māyā, its *guṇas* (and their products etc.) have been quiet and ineffective—ŚR.

ment (or the false identification of the body with soul) attained to the highest goal (Liberation from *Samsāra*) by following the spiritual course taught to him by the sage Aurva.

CHAPTER NINE*

The Descent of the Gaṅgā¹; The Story of Kalmāṣa-pāda

Śrī Śuka said :

1. (Like his grandfather Sagara) Am̐ umān (also renounced his kingdom in favour of his son Dilīpa), and practised penance for a long time, with the desire of bringing the Gaṅgā down on the earth. But he was not successful (in his mission). In course of time, he passed away.

2. His son Dilīpa also proved unsuccessful, and met death (in his attempt to bring down Gaṅgā). His son Bhāgīratha performed very severe austerities.

3. The goddess (Gaṅgā) manifested herself to him and said, "I am pleased (with your penance). I shall bestow on you the boon (desired by you)." Being assured thus, the king bowed low (in humility), and submitted to her his object (of performing the penance).

* This chapter describes the Solar race from King Am̐sumān to Khaṭvāṅga. The genealogy (or rather the chronological order of kings) is as follows :

Am̐sumān → Dilīpa → Bhagīratha → Śruta → Nābha → Sindhu-dvīpa → Ayutāyu → Rtuparṇa → Sarvakāma → Sudās → Saudāsa (Kalmāṣa-pāda) → Aśmaka → Mūlaka (Nārīkavaca) → Daśaratha → Aīdāvīḍa → Viśvasaha → Khaṭvāṅga (Bh.P. omits the name of King Ambarīṣa Nabhāgi, the descendant of Śruta, vide *VP.4.4.36*, *Śiva P. Umā* 39. 9-10 *Vāyu P.* 3.88, 169-71.)

1. The Descent of the Gaṅgā is another popular legend recorded in the *MBH. Vana*. chs. 108, 109, *Bhīṣma* 6.28-50; *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa—Bāla Sargas* 43-44; *Brahmāṇḍa P.* II.56. 34-50.

It is probably a race-memory how three generations of the Solar race tried to irrigate the parched plains of the kingdom of Ayodhyā.

4. (She replied :) “Is there anyone capable of sustaining my force while I descend on the earth. Otherwise, I shall penetrate the crust of the earth and go down to Rasātala, the 6th sub-terranean region, Oh King.

5. Besides, I am not willing to go to the earth. Men will wash of their sins in me. Where (and how) can I absolve myself of that sin ? Some remedy on this should also be considered, Oh King.”

Bhagīratha said :

6* “Righteous persons who have renounced actions (for obtaining worldly objects), and have controlled their sense-organs, and persons devoted to the contemplation of Brahman, (or prominent knowers of Brahman), are themselves capable of purifying the world. By the contact of their body (while bathing in you) they will annihilate your sins, as Lord Hari, the destroyer of sins, abides in them.

7. God Rudra, who is the very Soul of corporeal beings, and in Whom is woven this universe, warp and woof, as threads are interwoven in a piece of cloth, will bear your force.”

7A. Having heard this speech of Bhagīratha, Gaṅgā advised, “In that case, propitiate the great god Śiva, for sustaining the velocity of my waters.”

8. Having spoken thus,¹ the king propitiated god Śiva by his penance. Within a short period (of penance), Lord Śiva was also highly pleased with him.

9. Granting the prayer of the King with the words, “Be it so”, Lord Śiva who is always benevolent to the world, carefully bore on his head the Gaṅgā whose waters are hallowed by the feet of Hari.

*VJ : Pious persons endowed with quiescence, self-control etc., completely free from desires (for heaven, pleasures etc.), thoroughly devoted to meditation of Brahman and thus established in Brahman and purifiers of the world, will annihilate your sins by their physical contact (e.g. washing hands or feet in your waters or by ablutions).

VR and GD. : As Lord Hari, the destroyer of sins, abides in them, the question of transfer of your sins by them to others does not arise, as Hari annihilates the sins altogether.

† v.l. : *tac chrutvā*—Hearing this—VR.

10. The royal sage Bhagīratha led Gaṅgā, the purifier of the Universe, to the spot where the bodies of his fore-fathers (great-grand-uncles), lay reduced to ashes.

11. (Closely on the heels of) Bhagīratha who rode (in advance) in a chariot speeding with the velocity of the wind she rushed after him, hallowing the countries or regions (through which she flowed), and bathed the burnt-up sons of Sagara (with her waters).

12. The sons of Sagara, though struck down by their offence against a Brāhmaṇa (sage Kapila), attained to the celestial regions simply through the contact of her waters with their ashes.

13. Merely by the contact of her waters with the ashes to which their bodies were reduced, the sons of Sagara ascended the heaven. What need be said in case of those who observe religious vows and serve her with faith ?

14. What has been glorified above about (the hallowing power of) the heavenly river is not very miraculous, inasmuch as She springs from the lotus-like feet of the Infinite Lord (Viṣṇu) and puts an end to *Samsāra*.

15. Concentrating their minds properly with faith in Him, pure-minded sages shed off their contacts with (and attachment to) the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* (and its product—their body,—misidentified with the soul)—which is so very difficult to cast off—and have instantly attained identity with Brahman.

16. Śruta was born from Bhagīratha who had another son named Nābha. His son was Sindhudvīpa from whom was born Ayutāyu.

17. Ayutāyu's son was Rtuparṇa, a friend of Nala who, in exchange of imparting the secret technique of the play of dice to Nala, learnt from him the equestrian science (the secret of managing horses). His (Rtuparṇa's) son was Sarvakāma.

18. From his loins was born Sudās whose son was the husband of Madayantī, Oh King. People called him Mitrāsaha, and rarely as Kalmāṣapāda. He became a demon through the curse of Vasiṣṭha, but remained issueless in consequence of his own act.

King (Parikṣit) asked :

19. We wish to know the reason or the occasion of the pronouncement of the curse by preceptor Vasiṣṭha on the great-souled son of Sudās. Be pleased to narrate it to us, if there be no secret about it.

Śrī Śuka said :

20. As the tradition goes, king Saudāsa (the son of Sudās) happened to kill a certain demon, while on hunting expedition. He allowed his brother to escape. He (the Rākṣasa's brother) went away with a determination to wreak revenge.

21. Remembering the offence (of killing his brother) committed by the king, and disguising himself as the cook of the king in the palace, he dressed human flesh and presented it for service to the king's preceptor Vasiṣṭha, who came there to dine.

22. Perceiving easily that a prohibited article of food (human flesh) was about to be served to him, the venerable sage flared up in rage, and cursed the king, "You will turn into an ogre by this improper act of yours."

23. Having come to know that, that act (serving of human flesh) was committed by a demon (and that the king was innocent), he limited the duration of his curse to (a period of twelve years. But (in the meanwhile) Saudāsa took water into the hollow of his joined palms and was ready to counter-curse his preceptor (who uttered the unjustifiable imprecation).

24. He was however prevented (from cursing his preceptor) by (his queen) Madayantī. The king found that all the cardinal points, the sky, the earth were all instinct with life. (And lest he should injure living beings), he let the water be charged with wrathful *mantras*, fall on his own feet (and thus justified his epithet—*mitra-saha*, indulgent towards friends).

25. Changed into a demonic state, and with both of his feet turned black (by the water charged by him with a curse), he happened to see a forest-dwelling couple of Brāhmaṇas in the act of sexual intercourse.

26. Overpowered with hunger, he caught hold of the Brāhmaṇa, when his wife helplessly appealed to him, "Your honour is not a born ogre. You are veritably a great hero (a chariot-warrior) belonging directly to the race of Ikṣvākus.

27. Oh warrior ! You are the husband of Madayantī. It does not behove you to perpetrate unrighteous deeds. Be pleased to restore to me who am desirous of having a child, the Brāhmaṇa, my husband, who has not accomplished his purpose.

28. Oh King ! This human body is capable of securing all the objects (*puruṣārthas*) in human life. Hence the destruction of this body is called the total destruction of all purposes.

29. This Brāhmaṇa is learned and endowed with asceticism, virtuous character and other qualities. He desires to propitiate Brahman which is designated as *Mahā-puruṣa* (Viṣṇu) who abides in all beings as their Inner Controller, but lies obscured in them on account of *guṇas*.

30. This being the case, how does this prominent Brāhmaṇa sage deserve death at the hands of a great royal sage like you, even as the death of a son at the hands of the father, Oh knower of the righteous path ?

31. Your worship is respected by the righteous. How do you approve of the death of the righteous, sinless (innocent) *Śrotriya* who is well-versed in the Vedas (or innocent like a child in the womb), any more than killing of a cow.

32. If he is to be your victim, please devour me first, inasmuch as I shall not live without him for a minute, and am as good as dead."

33. Disregarding the piteous appeal of the helpless bewailing Brāhmaṇa woman, Saudāsa deluded by (his preceptor's) curse, devoured the Brāhmaṇa, as a tiger would prey upon a beast.

34. Finding her impregnator (husband) eaten up by a cannibal, the Brāhmaṇa woman lamented herself. Flying in a rage, the chaste lady uttered the imprecation on the king.

35. "You wicked fellow ! Inasmuch as my husband has been devoured by you while I was afflicted with sexual desire, your death too is indicated to follow while engaged in sexual intercourse, you foolish one."

36. Having thus cursed king Mitrasaha, the woman who was determined to attain to the region of her husband, consigned to flames his bones in a burning fire, and followed the course of her husband (by immolating herself to fire).

37. When freed from the curse at the end of the twelfth year, he (Saudāsa) proceeded to have sexual intercourse (with his queen), but the queen who knew well the imprecation of the Brāhmaṇa lady prevented him from that attempt.

38. Thenceforth, he gave up all pleasures with women and he remained issueless by this act. It was with his consent that the sage Vasiṣṭha begot an issue on queen Madayantī.

39. For seven years she carried the foetus and did not deliver. Vasiṣṭha then hit her abdomen with a stone, and the son so born came to be known as Aśmaka.

40. From Aśmaka was born Mūlaka who was protected on all sides (from Paraśurāma) by women, and hence he is called *Nārī-kavaca* (women-armoured). He is called Mūlaka as he was the root of further pro-creation of the Kṣatriya race, when it was being exterminated by Paraśurāma.

41. From Mūlaka sprang forth Daśaratha of whom a son, Aiḍaviḍa was born. His son was King Viśvasaha whose son Khaṭvāṅga became the sovereign ruler of the world.

42. Being entreated by gods, the invincible king killed a number of demons in the battle. Learning (from gods) that only one *muhūrta* (48 minutes) of his life is left, he hurried back to his capital (in a celestial car) and concentrated his mind on the Supreme Lord.

43. (He mused to himself). Neither my life nor my sons, nor my wealth nor the earth, nor my empire or my queens are dearer to me than the Brāhmaṇa race who form our family-deities.

44. Not even in my childhood, my mind ever took delight in unrighteousness. I did not look upon anything other than the Lord of hallowed reputation (Viṣṇu) as the reality.

45. A boon of my choice was offered for bestowal on me by gods, the rulers of the three worlds. But as I contemplate on the creator of all beings, I do not seek any object of desire.¹

1. —As the boon will come in the way of my realization of the Lord —VR. Gd. BP.

46. The celestials themselves have got their minds and senses distracted (by objects of senses), and do not realize the beloved, eternal Soul who stays established in their own heart. Need it be said that human and other beings, characterised by *rajas* and *tamas*, can never do so.

47. I shall give up, through deep devotion to the Creator of the Universe, attachment to *guṇas* (the product of *guṇas* viz. the object of senses) which has been firmly fixed in the mind, by the very nature of things, but which are the creation of the Illusive Power (*Māyā*) of the Lord, and hence are as unreal and transitory as the city of Gandharvas in the sky, and take asylum in him.

48. Having determined thus by his reasoning capacity and intellect, which was attracted towards himself (and thus possessed) by Lord Nārāyaṇa, he discarded ignorance¹ and the consequent false notions of the identity of the body with Soul and attained to his essential nature (which is Brahmanhood).

49.* (The state) that is the Supreme Brahman which is very subtle but not a void² though it is as good as intangible, as it is beyond the range of expression, and which the devotees of Lord Viṣṇu sing as the glorious Lord Vāsudeva.

Any act except the propitiation of Hari, is not acceptable to me as it is not conducive to Liberation—VJ.

1. *hitvānyabhavam ajñānam*—Having given up his body.—VR.

*VJ. : The stage to which Vedantins call the Supreme Brahman, the *yogins* describe as very subtle, beyond the ken of senses like the sky. Some non-vedic thinkers (viz. the Buddhists, especially the followers of Mādhyamika school) assume it as void; but it is really positive (and not void) and which the followers of the Pañcarātra school (*Sātvatas*) call Lord Vasudeva.

JG. With his intellect (mind) possessed by Nārāyaṇa, Khaṭvāṅga attained to Brahmā's region in a *muhūrta*.

2. BP. *aśūnya*—(i) Proved as positively existent and not non-existent like horns of a hare.

(ii) *Śūnya* is destitute of *guṇas*, attributeless. *a-śūnya* means full of infinite excellences, conducive to the good of all or devoid of *guṇas* which deserve to be discarded.

Sya-bhāva : The *brahmabhāva* implies devoted service to the Lord as of a chaste woman to her husband.

CHAPTER TEN¹*The Story of Rāma*²

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. To king Khaṭvāṅga was born Dīrghabāhu, whose son was Raghu of extensively spread renown. From him sprang the emperor Aja of whom Daśaratha was born.

2. When earnestly prayed by celestials this³ glorious Lord Hari, directly and entirely composed of Brahman⁴ Itself, divided Himself in four parts, and was born as Daśaratha's sons under the designations Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna—himself in its entirety as Rāma and as his rays (*aṁśa*) in Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna.

3. His life and works have been described in details and also heard by sages who have clearly understood the Truth.

1. This chapter covers only five generations :

Khaṭvāṅga (mentioned in ch. 9) → Dīrghabāhu → Raghu → Aja → Daśaratha → Rāma.

2. The Rāma legend is one of the most popular ones in Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. Limiting ourselves to Brahmanical Sanskrit epics or *Purāṇas*, the most important source is Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. Its critical edition (M.S. University, Baroda) shows that the Rāma legend is better preserved in the *MBH Vana* 274-293 (also ch. 148-152, *Sabha* 50, *Drona*, 59) than in the vulgate of *Vālmiki Rām*. The spurious nature of many cantos, the *Bāla* and *Uttara Kāṇḍas*, is now established. We find Rāma legend in *Padma P.*, *Pātāla khaṇḍa* chs. 1-68 (Rāma's *Aśvamedha*), and ch. 116-117 (a slightly different version in prose and verse); *Garuḍa P.* I. 143, *Nārada P.* I. 79.7-26; II. 75, *Agni P.* Chs. 5-11; *Skandha P.* *Brahma khaṇḍa*—*Dharmāraṇya* ch. 30; *Vāyu P.* III. 88.183r197; *Devī Bhāgavata* III. chs. 21-30 and in *Upapurāṇas* like *Nṛsiṃha* chs. 47-52, *Saura* ch. 30 and later versions like *Adhyātma* and *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇas*. The Rāma problem is extensively studied by Indian and Western scholars (vide A.D. Pusalkar: *Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, pp. 189-205). A comparison of Rāma legend in the Bh.P. with those in the above *Purāṇas* is beyond the scope of this work. But the special feature of the legend in the Bh. P. is the non-mention of fire-ordeal of Sītā after the conquest of Laṅkā, and at the time of horse-sacrifice afterwards. After her abandonment by Rāma, Sītā does not return to Ayodhyā, but after entrusting her children to sage Vālmiki, meditating on Rāma she enters in a cavity in the earth never to return.

3. ³This whom you have witnessed in your mother's womb—GS.

4. ⁴The main subject or import of the Vedas—VJ.

The story of the Lord of Sītā might have been listened by you many times.

4. May that Lord of the Kosala (country) protect us—the Lord who gave up his kingdom for honouring the pledge given by his father, and wandered from forest to forest on his lotus-feet that were too tender to bear the touch of the palms of his beloved Sītā (who pressed and massaged them to relieve their fatigue), and whose fatigue from journey was soothed by the leader of the monkeys (Hanumān or Sugrīva) and his younger brother Lakṣmaṇa; the Lord who constructed a bridge at the request of the deity presiding over the ocean, which was terrified at the display of his frowning eyebrows, excited by his wrath at the separation from his beloved, caused (by Rāvaṇa who was incited to do so) by disfiguring of Śūrpaṇakhā (by Lakṣmaṇa's mutilating her nose and ears), and thus who was like a conflagration to the forest (in the form) of the wicked (demons).

5. During the sacrificial session of Viśvāmitra, prominent demons and nocturnal predators like Mārīca and others were (single-handedly) despatched by him while Lakṣmaṇa was simply witnessing.

6. In the hall specially erected for Sītā's free election of her (prospective) husband, wherein were assembled eminent warriors of the world, Rāma, like unto a cub of an elephant sportively picking up a sugar-cane, lifted up the formidable bow of god Śiva which required three hundred bearers to bring it (at the hall), strung it, drew it and broke it in the middle, oh King.

7. Having won (as a prize) Śrī, the beautiful goddess of prosperity, who had already a place of honour on his bosom, —but is now called Sītā, who was eminently suitable to him in beauty, virtues, disposition, age and form, Rāma, on his way (to Ayodhyā), humbled down the overbearing pride and arrogance of Paraśurāma, the chief of Bhṛgu who extirpated the Kṣatriya race from the earth thrice seven times.

8. He honoured with his head (bent low) the order of his henpecked father who was bound by the noose of truthfulness (pledge to grant two boons to Kaikeyī who now demanded kingdom for her son and banishment of Rāma to forest). With

his spouse, he relinquished his kingdom, wealth, his beloved relations (like his mother etc.), friends and palace and left for the forest just as a *yogin* who has renounced all attachments, would give up his body.

9. While (armed) with an irresistible bow in his hand, he went about leading a hard life (in the forest as a model for mankind to follow), he got mutilated the features of the wicked-minded sister of Rāvaṇa (viz. Śūrpaṇakhā who wanted to devour Sītā with a view to enjoy amorous life with Rāma etc.), and killed fourteen thousand of her kinsmen of whom **Khara**, Triśiras and Dūṣaṇa were prominent.

10. Being enticed away from his hermitage on seeing a **miraculous** (golden) form of a deer (assumed by Mārīca), who was so **deputed** by the Ten-necked demon Rāvaṇa whose passion (for Sītā) was inflamed by listening to the description of Sītā's beauty, Rāma quickly slew Mārīca with an arrow, even as god Rudra (or Vīrabhadra) despatched Dakṣa (or Lord Nṛsiṃha killed Hiraṇyakaśipu), Oh Lord of men.

11. When, during his absence (from the hermitage) in the forest, the princess of **Videha** (Sītā) was abducted by the vilest demon Rāvaṇa like a wolf (stealthily carrying away a sheep), Rāma, being separated from his beloved, wandered in the forest with his brother Lakṣmaṇa simulating pitiable helplessness¹ demonstrating (to the world) the tragic fate of those who are attached to women.

12*. Rāma, whose feet are adored by gods Brahmā and Śiva even though he assumed the human form, then performed (like a son) the prescribed formal obsequies of Jaṭāyu (the king of vultures) who laid down his life (in attempting to free Sītā) for Rāma's sake; he then slew the demon Kabandha²

1. VJ. quotes a 'Smṛti' text which denies the possibility of affliction in the omnipresent Almighty Rāma. He feigned affliction for the public. VC. quotes *Rāma-tāpani UP.* 1.1 and denies the possibility of affliction in Rāma, the veritable *Para-Brahman* Himself. Rāma simply gave support to *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra-rasa*.

*Not found in VJ's text.

2. He was originally a Gandharva Prince Viśvāvasu who was blessed with immortality by god Brahmā. He arrogantly attacked Indra who, with his-Vajra squeezed his head and thighs into his body. When he beg-

(whose head was in his chest and who attempted to seize Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with his hands) ; he made an alliance with the monkeys. When Vāli was killed, He learnt the whereabouts of his beloved (Sītā). He then reached the shores of the ocean (near Laṅkā) with his forces of monkey chiefs (Sugrīva, Hanumān etc.).

13. (When, even after a fast of consecutive three nights, the presiding deity of the sea did not present himself, Rāma flared up in anger). The sea (its presiding deity) with alligators and aquatic animals in whom got panicky and bewildered, at the cast of his side-glance in apparent anger, and with its roar hushed up in terror, assumed a (human) form and taking on his head articles of worship approached his (Rāma's) lotus-like feet and spoke as follows :

14. "We, dull witted fellows, did not know you definitely to be the Immutable, Eternal (First) Person, the overlord of the Universe, Oh Supreme Lord. You are the Lord of *Prakṛti* (the source of *guṇas*), from the *Sattva-guṇa* out of which are evolved the celestials, from the *rajas*, the *prajāpatis* (Lord of creation) and from *tamas*, the goblin-leaders and other evil spirits.

15. May you be pleased to cross me at your sweet will. Do kill Rāvaṇa, the excreation of Viśravas who makes the three world shriek (in fear). Regain your consort, Oh hero ! (Although my waters will not obstruct your movements) do construct a bridge here for the spread of your glory which (future) kings, conquerors of the quarters (world) reaching here, will sing."

16. Having constructed a bridge across the sea with mountain peaks of various sizes, covered with trees the branches of which were shaken off by monkey chiefs, Rāma, the foremost in the Raghu's race, under the supervision and guid-

ged for livelihood, he was given two long arms and a mouth on the belly. He was asked to stay near Mātāṅgāśrama in Krauñcāraṇya—a part of Daṇḍakāraṇya. When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa came after Jaṭāyu's funeral, he caught hold of them. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cut his hands. He asked who they were and then told them his life story and fell dead. When they cremated his body, a Gandharva King (Kabandha's former self) rose in the air, advised Rāma to go to Sugrīva for more information about Sītā.—*Vālmiki Rām. Aranya Kāṇḍa—Sargas 70-72.*

ance of Vibhīṣaṇa, and accompanied by the forces of Vānara chiefs like Sugrīva, Nīla, Hanumān, entered Laṅkā which was already burnt by (Hanumān) previously.

17. Like a river churned up by herds of elephants, the city of Laṅkā was in a state of commotion when its playgrounds, barns and granaries, treasuries, doorways, citygates, assembly-halls, roofs, balconies and pigeon-cots were barricaded and besieged by the armies of the monkey-chiefs, and platforms, flagstaffs, gold-vases (on either sides of entrances) and public squares were destroyed.

18. Observing the state of siege, the king of Rākṣasas (Rāvaṇa) despatched against them all his followers like Nikumbha, Kumbha, Dhūmrākṣa, Durmukha, Surāntaka, Narāntaka and others, and his sons Indrajit, Prahasta, Atikāya, Vikampana and others, and finally (his brother) Kumbhakarṇa.

19. Accompanied by Sugrīva, Lakṣmaṇa, Hanumān, Gandhamāda, Nīla, Aṅgada, Jāmbavān the bear, Panasa and others, Rāma marched against the Rākṣasa army impenetrable on account of its weaponry like swords, spikes, bows, *prāsas* (darts), double-edged swords, lances, arrows, iron clubs and long swords.

20. Aṅgada and all the generals of Rāma's forces fell upon the Rākṣasa army consisting of battalions of elephants, infantry, chariots and cavalry, and engaged them in duels and struck them down with trees, rocks, maces and arrows, as their Lord Rāvaṇa had lost his auspicious luck by the touch of Sītā (in abduction).

21. Perceiving the destruction of his armies, Rāvaṇa, the king of Rākṣasas, got enraged. Ascending his aerial car Puṣpaka, he attacked Rāma who rode resplendent in a refulgent chariot brought from the celestial region by Mātali (the charioteer of god Indra). Rāvaṇa struck Rāma with sharp arrows with horse-shoe-shaped heads.

22. Rāma scolded him : "You, excretion of a man-eater ! During our absence our beloved was taken away by you, a wicked fellow, even as a dog (steals away things when the house-owner is away). To you, a shameless fellow, I, like the god of death of irresistible power meting out the puni-

shment to the perpetrator of a sin for his act, shall award the fruit of your detestable action, just now."

23. Reproaching Rāvaṇa thus, Rāma shot his arrow that was already fixed on the bow. It pierced Rāvaṇa's heart as if with the impact of the thunderbolt. Like a meritorious person whose balance of good acts is exhausted, Rāvaṇa fell from his aerial car, with blood gushing out of his ten mouths, while his partisans cried out 'Alas !'.

24. Thousands of Rākṣasa women (whose husbands were killed¹) along with Mandodarī (Rāvaṇa's chief queen) came out of Laṅkā and rushed to the battle-field¹ wailing loudly.

25. They embraced their respective relatives who were struck down by Lakṣmaṇa's arrows. Beating themselves (their breasts with their own hands), those helpless ladies lamented loudly.

26. "Alas ! Oh Rāvaṇa ! Oh Lord ! The terror of the world ! Undone we are ! Bereft of you, now trampled over by the enemies, to whom can Laṅkā look up for protection ?

27. Oh highly blessed glorious Lord ! Being overwhelmed with the passion of love, you did not estimate and anticipate the potential superforce of Sītā's virtue whereby you have been reduced to this wretched condition.

28. Widowed is Laṅkā and we as well, Oh delight of your family ! Your body has become now food for vultures, your soul fit for hell."

Śrī Śuka said :

29. Under instructions from Rāma, the king of Kośalas Vibhīṣaṇa performed the prescribed funeral rites known as 'sacrifice to manes', of his relatives.

30. Thereafter, the glorious Lord Rāma caught sight of Sītā sitting under a *Śimsipā* tree, in the retreat of the Aśoka forest. She was emaciated and suffering from the (mental) agony, due to her separation from him.

1. Although commentators like GS., VR., GD. and BP. insist that those thousands of Rākṣasa women went to the spot where Rāvaṇa fell, the above translation is justifiable as correct, in view of the next verse—
The translator

31. Perceiving his most beloved wife in that helpless condition, Rāma was moved with compassion, even though her lotus-like face began to blossom with delight, at the sight of his own self.

32-33-34-A. Having conferred on Vibhīṣaṇa the sovereignty over Laṅkā, and Lordship over the Rākṣasas, and the life-span of a *Kalpa* (a period of the life span of fourteen Manus), the glorious Lord placed her in the aerial car Puṣpaka and accompanied by brothers (Lakṣmaṇa and adopted brother Sugrīva) and Hanumān, Rāma ascended Puṣpaka. As he had completed the vow (of forest-dwelling for fourteen years), he returned to his capital (Ayodhyā), being showered on the way with flowers offered by the presiding deities of various regions, and his glorious deeds being joyously sung by gods like Brahmā and others.

34-B-36. When Rāma heard that his brother put on bark-garments only, and subsisted on barley seeds boiled in cow's urine, had grown matted hair and slept on bare ground with Kuśa grass spread over it, being extremely merciful by nature, he was deeply distressed.

37-39. Hearing of the arrival of his elder brother Rāma, Bharata took over his head the pair of wooden sandals (given to him as a token of love by Rāma) proceeded from his camp at Nandigrāma¹, along with citizens, his cabinet ministers and family preceptors. With vocal and instrumental music and in company of knowers of the Vedas loudly singing Vedic hymns, with flags of guilt edges and chariots plated with gold, and decked with beautiful banners of various colours, with gold caparisoned noble horses and warriors clad in gold armours, with artisans of different guilds and prominent courtesans and servants following on foot, and taking with him the royal insignia (such as white umbrella, chowries etc.), and valuable articles of various kinds (as presents), Bharata fell at his feet with his heart melted in tears of affection.

40. Bharata placed before him the pair of Rāma's sandals (carried on his head so far), and stood before him with

1. Modern Nandgaon, close to Bharata Kuṇḍa, eight or nine miles South of Fyzabad (U.P.)—N.L.De—GDAMI, p. 138.

folded palms, and eyes full of tears. Rāma embraced him with his arms for a long time bathing him with waters that flowed from his eyes.

41. Rāma along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa paid personal obeisance to the worthiest of the Brāhmaṇas, and he (in turn) was bowed down by his subjects.

42. Seeing that their (real) lord had returned after the lapse of a long period, the subjects of northern Kosala, waving their upper garments and showering them with flowers, danced in joy.

43. Bharata carried the pair of sandals (of Rāma); Vibhīṣaṇa along with Sugrīva wielded chowries (cāmaras) and a fan (on his either side); Hanumān, the son of the wind god, held up the umbrella.

44. Śatrughna (the youngest brother of Rāma) held a bow and a pair of quivers, Sītā, a waterpot of gourd, Aṅgada, the sword, Jāmbuvān, the king of bears, his gold plated shield, Oh King.

45. Occupying a seat in the Puṣpaka, attended to by prominent courtesans (mentioned above), and extolled by bards, the glorious Lord Rāmacandra shone like a rising moon in the midst of planets, Oh King.

46-47. Greeted by his brothers, Rāma also entered his festive capital city. Entering the palace, he paid due respects to the wife of his preceptor (or Kaikeyī and Sumitrā), his own mother, Kausalyā, the preceptors and elderly persons, his friends and younger (brothers etc.), and was worshipped by them in return. Sītā, the princess of Videha, and Lakṣmaṇa paid respect with due formalities.

48. Just as (dead) bodies get up after the return of the vital principle (life), the mothers were as if inspired with life when their sons returned. They placed their respective sons on their lap, and bathed them in the flood of their tears, and shed off their grief (of separation for their sons).

49. Having got removed (cut off) Rāma's matted locks of hair, the preceptor Vasiṣṭha, along with elderly persons, sprinkled over him the waters of the four seas, holy rivers etc., as the coronation ceremony even as Bṛhaspati did, as per procedure laid down in *Sāstras*, to Indra.

50. Having taken a full bath including his head (the matted hair whereof were dressed off), Rāma, attired richly and adorned with wreaths of flowers and ornaments, appeared resplendent with his elegantly dressed and richly adorned (younger) brother and his consort Sītā.

51. When respectfully requested with a bow (to occupy the throne) by his brother Bharata, Rāma accepted the throne and protected in a fatherly way, his subjects who were devoted to their righteous duties according to the characteristics of their respective class in society (*varṇa*) and stage in life (*āśrama*). The subjects on their part regarded him as their father.

52. While Rāma, a king, expert in Dharma (Law and righteous duties of everyone) ruled and brought happiness to every being, the period of his reign was like the *Kṛta* Age (the Golden Age) even though actually the Age called Tretā was then, current.

53. (During his reign) forests, rivers, mountains, subcontinents, continents and seas—all yielded whatever was desired by the subjects, Oh prominent Bhārata.

54. While Rāma, (the incarnation of) Lord Viṣṇu was the king, there was no trouble from anxieties, diseases, old age, fatigue, pain, sorrow, fear, exhaustion. Even death did not take the toll of unwilling persons.

55. Strict in the observance of the vow of having only one wife throughout his life, leading a pious life of a royal sage, and of pure character, he himself performed strictly his duties as a householder, teaching thereby (a model life) to the world.

56. By her deep love, obedience, pious character, disciplined modesty, intelligence and bashfulness, the chaste queen Sītā who understood the mind of her Lord, captivated Rāma's heart.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Story of Rāma (concluded)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The glorious Lord Rāma who was educated in his preceptor's academy¹, worshipped his ownself, viz. the Supreme Lord (Viṣṇu) who represents all gods in his person, by performing sacrifices with excellent materials.²

2. (When the sacrifice was concluded), the Lord donated as sacrificial fee the eastern direction (eastern part of his empire) to the *Hotṛ* (the sacrificial priest who recites the *mantras* from the *Rgveda*), the Southern quarter to the sacrificial priest called *Brahmā*, the Western part to the *adhvaryu* (reciter of *Sūktas* from the *Yajurveda*), northern direction (northern part of his empire) to the priest that sang *Sāma* hymns in the sacrifice.

3. To his preceptor (Vasiṣṭha), he gave as grant the remaining portion of the land at the centre, considering a Brāhmaṇa who is devoid of any craving or desire, deserves all this.

4. In this way he was left with his clothes and ornaments (that were on his person), while the queen Sītā (princess of Videha) had only those ornaments which were essential for a lady whose husband is alive (the rest, she distributed to Brahmana ladies).

5. Perceiving this affection of the Lord who treated Brāhmaṇas as gods, the Brāhmaṇas were highly pleased and with their hearts overwhelmed with affection, returned all the gifts to him and said :

6. "Oh illustrious Lord ! What is it that you have not given to us when entering into our hearts you dispel the darkness (of ignorance) by your effulgence, Oh ruler of the world.

7. We bow down to you, Oh Rāma who regard Brāhmaṇas as gods, and whose intelligence (i.e. knowledge) is boundless and unrestricted. You are the leader of those

1. *ācāryavān*, cf.

ācāryatān puruṣo veda—Chāndogya up. 6.14.2

2. Conducted by excellent sage like Vasiṣṭha—VR.

possessing excellent renown. Your feet are being meditated upon by sages and recluses”.

8 Once upon a time, while Rāma went about in disguise and unnoticed at night, with a desire to know the pulse of the public, he overheard somebody speaking with reference to his queen Sītā.

9. “I would not accept you a wicked, unchaste woman who lived in the house of a stranger. Rāma, an exorbitant doter of that woman Sītā, might be retaining her, but I am not Rāma to have you again.”

10. In this way, Sītā was abandoned by her husband who was afraid of the myriad-tongued, ignorant, unplacative public. She arrived at the hermitage of Vālmīki, the son of Pracetas.

11. Then being pregnant, in due course, she gave birth to twins—sons who came to be called Kuśa and Lava. The sage Vālmīki performed their purificatory rites (*jātakarma*).

12. Lakṣmaṇa had two sons known as Aṅgada and Citraketu (Candraketu, Cakraketu), and Bharata’s sons were Takṣa and Puṣkala, Oh protector of the earth.

13-14. The sons of Śatrughna were Subāhu and Śrutasena. During the course of the conquest of directions (i.e. of the world) Bharata slew Gandharvas by tens of millions and collecting their wealth, he handed it over to the king Rāma. Śatrughna slew the demon Lavaṇa¹, the son of Madhu and built up a city called Mathurā, on the site of Madhuvana.

15. Sītā who was forsaken by her husband, entrusted both of her sons to the sage (Vālmīki), and meditating upon the feet of Rāma, she entered into the bowels of the earth—so goes the tradition.

16.* Hearing of that news (about Sītā) and remembering of her various excellent virtues, (even) that glorious Lord Rāma was not able to restrain his grief, despite his attempts (to suppress it) by force of reason.

17. The attachment between men and women in this way brings (in its train) fear and affliction everywhere—even

1. Although Bh.P. calls him a demon, it means an unfriendly king, for his father Madhu was not a demon (vide infra 9.24.5).

*Deleted in VJ.’s text.

in the case of rulers of the world. What needs be said of ordinary persons whose minds are fixed on their house-hold (or of a common house-holder whose mind is attached to his house and property).

18. Thereafter the Lord (Rāma) led a life of strict continence, and continued to offer oblations to the sacrificial fire, for thirteen thousand years, without any interruption.

19. Leaving behind him in the heart of his devotees who meditate upon his foliage-like tender feet which were (once) pricked with thorns in the Daṇḍaka forest, Rāma then repaired to his own self-luminous region.

20. Rāma assumed this (human) form as a sport at the request of gods. His prowess (or essential nature) is free from (i.e. has no) equals or superiors. (Glorification of feats like) the destruction of Rākṣasas with multitudes of missiles or the construction of a bridge across the sea are no great praise in the case of Rāma. (It was only his sportive action). Were the monkeys his real helpmates in exterminating the enemies? (No).

21. I seek asylum with Rāma, the chief of Raghus, as my protector, whose pure glory efficacious enough to destroy all sins and serving as decorative ornaments to the elephants supporting the cardinal points (i.e. has spread all over the world)—is sung even today by sages (like Mārkaṇḍeya) in royal courts (as that of Yudhiṣṭhira), and whose lotus-like feet are adored by the crowns of the rulers of the celestial world (e.g. Indra), and Lord of wealth (Kubera) or by Protectors of the earth).

22. All the residents of the Kosal country by whom he was touched, seen, seated (by the side) or followed, attained to that region (*Mokṣa*) where persons expert in *yoga* go.

23* Oh King ! A person who treasures up in his mind the story of Rāma, (heard) through his ears, and exercises

*VJ : 'By merely listening to the name of Rāma, one becomes free from the bondage of *karma*. He quotes the following verse indicating how the whole world was imbued with Rāma, when Rāma was ruling:

*rāmo rāmo rāma iti sarveṣāṃ abhavattadā /
sarvo Rāma-mayo loka yadā Rāmas tva pālayat //*

This verse is quoted by VD also.

control over his passions, becomes free from the bondage of *Karmas* (and is liberated from *Samsāra*).

The King (Parīkṣit) asked :

24. How did the glorious Lord Rāma behave with his brothers and relatives? How did he conduct himself? How did they (his kith and kin), his subjects and citizens of Ayodhyā (reciprocally) behave with their ruler?

Śrī Śuka replied :

25. When the coronation was over, Rāma, the sovereign ruler of the three worlds, directed his brothers to conquer (and protect) all the four quarters (i.e. countries all over the world). He granted audience to all his people, and looked after the capital city along with his attendants.

26. With its streets besprinkled with water perfumed with sandal etc. and with fragrant drops of ichor exuded from the temples of elephants in rut, the city appeared to be exceedingly intoxicated with rapturous joy¹ at the return of its master.

27. It was beautified with gold domes (lit. pitchers) set on the crests of mansions, towers, assemblies, shrines, temples as well as with flags.

28. (The city was decorated) with (auspicious) arches erected with banana trees surrounded by (branches of) areca-nut trees, (or decorations consisting of bunches of fruits and plantains) banners of fancy cloth, mirrors, canopies and wreaths of flowers.

29. With articles of worship (and presents) in their hands, citizens approached him at various places and conferred blessings on him and prayed, "Be pleased to protect the earth which you lifted up formerly (in your boar-incarnation)".

30. Perceiving (hearing) that their Lord had arrived after a lapse of a long period, his subjects—both men and women—left their household duties, and with a desire to see him directly, climbed up to the tops of their houses, but though their eyes remained unsatisfied with viewing the lotus-eyed Rāma, they showered him with flowers.

1. v. Ṛ *Vāsita-gāmivā*—like a cow overwhelmed with passion

31-32. Thereafter, the Lord ~~entered~~ his own residence which was once occupied by his predecessor-kings. It was rich in unlimited treasures of every kind, and was ~~furnished~~ with invaluable articles of furniture, coverings etc. It was beautified with doors the thresholds of which were of coral, and with rows of pillars of *Vaiḍūrya* (cat's-eye) gems, reflecting (mirror like) floors of emeralds and walls of shining crystals.

33-34. It was decorated with garlands of various colours and kinds, with banners and buntings, with cloths, gems canopies and pearls brilliant like intelligence or at places the columns of *vaiḍūrya* (cat's eye) were decorated with brilliant pearls and equipped with all beautiful covetable objects. It was full of fragrance of incenses and lights and was decorated with flowers. It was provided with the services of men and women who being beautiful like gods, enhanced the charm of ornaments (they put on) themselves.

35. It is reported that in that palace the glorious Lord Rāma, the chief of spiritually wise persons who find bliss in their own self, enjoyed himself with his affectionate darling Sītā.

36. Rāma whose foliage-like tender feet are contemplated upon by men, enjoyed for a great number of years all the pleasures at the proper time, without causing any violation of righteousness.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Description of Ikṣvāku's Race¹ (concluded)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. From Kuśa's (Rāma's son's) loins sprang up Atithi who gave birth to Niṣadha, whose son was Nabha. Nabha's son was Puṇḍarīka from whom was born Kṣemadhanvā.

1. This chapter gives a chronological statement of the kings in the Ikṣvāku family which will end with Sumitra (118th king), as follows: (The list differs in some respects from Pargiter's Table of Royal Genealogies in AHT.)

2. His son was **Devānika** who had a son called **Aniha**, whose son was **Pāriyātra**. His son was **Bala** from whom was born **Sthala**¹ (Cala), and his son **Vajra-nābha** was born from an *amśa*—ray—of the Sun-god.

3. His son was **Khagaṇa** from whom **Vidhṛti** was born as a son. From **Vidhṛti** sprang **Hiraṇyanābha** who became a preceptor of *yoga* and a pupil of **Jaimini**.²

4. It was from **Hiraṇyanābha** that the sage **Yājñavalkya** of **Kosala** got instructions in *yoga* pertaining to the science of the soul (spiritual lore), which leads to the attainment of great mystical powers (*siddhis*), and cuts asunder the knot of ego or ignorance in the heart.

5. **Hiraṇyanābha**'s son was **Puṣya** from whom was born **Dhruvasandhi**. His son was **Agni-varṇa**, the father of **Śighra** who had **Maru** as his son.

6. It is this **Maru** who, having perfect mastery over *yoga*, is still residing at a village called **Kalāpa**³ and at the end of **Kali Age**, he will revive the extinct solar race again.

Kuśa→Atithi→Niṣadha→Nabha→Puṇḍarika→Kṣema-dhanvā→Devānika→Aniha→Pāriyātra→Bala→Sthala→Vajranābha→Khagaṇa→Vidhṛti→Hiraṇyanābha→Puṣya→Dhruvasandhi→Sudarśana→Agnivarṇa→Śighra→Maru→Praśruta→Sandhi→Amarṣaṇa→Mahasvān→Viśvasāhva→Prasenajit→Takṣaka→Bṛhadbala (contemporary of Pāṇḍavas, but an ally of Kauravas; killed by Abhimanyu)→Bṛhadgana→Urukriya→Vatsavṛddha→Prativyoma→Bhānu→Divāka→Sahadeva→Bṛhadāsva→Bhānumān→Pratikāśva→Supratika→Marudeva→Sunakṣatra→Puṣkara→Antarikṣa→Sutapas→Amitrajit→Bṛhadvāja→Barhis→Kṛtañjaya→Raṇaṇjaya→Sañjaya→Śākya→Suddhoda→Lāṅgala→Prasenjit→Kṣudraka→Raṇaka→Suratha→Sumitra (kings from Bṛhadbala onwards ruled in the **Kali Age**).

1. GS.GD.BP. take **Bala** & **Sthala** as father and son. B.P. specifically states : *Balasya Sthala-nāmā putro' bhavad ityarthah.*

2. Can this be the author of the *Sūtras* of **Pūrvamīmāṃsā** or the pupil of **Vyāsa** as **Hiraṇyanābha**'s 14th descendant **Bṛhadbala** was a contemporary of **Pāṇḍavas**? He is probably some ancient sage of the same name.

3. *Kalāpa-grāma* : A village situated near **Badarikāśrama** vide *Bh. P.* 10.87.7. From *Nārada P.* II. 67.6 it appears that **Nārada** and other sages were residents of this place. Here **Maru** and **Devāpi**, the last kings of the Solar and Lunar races, perform penance and wait to re-establish their dynasties at **Ayodhyā** and **Hastināpura** after **Kalki**, the tenth incarnation of **Viṣṇu**, has established social and religious order. According to the

7. Maru's son was Pra-Suśruta (or Suśruta), whose son was Sandhi, his son Amarṣaṇa, who gave birth to Mahasvān, from whom was born Viśvasāhva.

8. Viśvasāhva's son was Prasenajit whose son was Takṣaka; his son was Bṛhadbala who was killed in the battle by your father (Abhimanyu).

9. These are the kings of the Ikṣvāku race in the past. Now listen to the names of kings who are yet to come in future. Bṛhadbala will have (?) a son by name Bṛhadraṇa¹.

10. Bṛhadraṇa's son will be Urukriya, whose son will be Vatsa-vṛddha; from him will spring Prativyoma whose son will be Bhānu; Bhānu's son will be Divāka the leader of the celestial army.

11. Divāka's son will be the great hero Sahadeva whose son will be Bṛhadaśva of whom will be born Bhānumān. Bhānumān's son will be Pratīkāśva whose son will be Supratīka.

12. From him will be born Marudeva, whose son will be Sunakṣatra. Thence will be Puṣkara whose son will be Antarikṣa; his son will be Sutapas, the father of Amitrajit.

13. From him will be born Bṛhadraja, whose son will be Barhis; thence Kṛtañjaya, whose son will be Raṇaṇjaya; thence will be born Sañjaya.

14. From him will be born Śākya; of him Śuddhoda from whom in turn will spring Lāṅgala; thence will be Prasenajit from whom will be born Kṣudraka.

15. From Kṣudraka will spring Raṇaka who will have a son called Suratha. Suratha's son Sumitra will be the last scion—These will be the kings descended in the race of Bṛhadbala.

16. The race of Ikṣvākus will end up with Sumitra for when he ascends the throne, the race of Ikṣvāku will be terminated and extinct in the Kali age.

Vāyu P. 91.7, Kalāpa is near Meru where Purūravas and Ūrvaśī honeymooned. N.L. De on the authority of Col. Raper locates it near the source of Sarasvatī—a tributary of the Alakanandā, in Badrinath in Garhwal—*GDAMI P* 84.

1. If Bṛhadbala is killed by Abhimanyu, Bṛhadraṇa must have been born after the Bhārata war at the most, while Śuka is narrating these two generations after the Bhārata war—The Translator.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN¹*The Description of the Race of Nimi²*

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. After commencing the session of a sacrifice, Nimi, the son of Ikṣvāku invited Vasiṣṭha to officiate as a sacrificial priest (*ṛtvij*). He, on his part, replied, "Oh king ! I have been already requested by Indra (to conduct his sacrifice).

2. After completing his sacrifice, I shall return (to look after your sacrifice). Wait till then for me". The house-

1. This chapter gives the genealogy of Nimi, the second son of Ikṣvāku, the original founder of the Janaka dynasty of Mithilā. The genealogy is practically the same as in *Vāyu P.* 91 and *Viṣṇu P.* 4.5.1-34. It is as follows :

Nimi→Janaka alias Mithi (*Vāyu P.* 89.5)→Udāvasu→Nandivardhana→Suketu→Devarāta→Brhadratha→Mahāvīrya→Sudhṛti→Dhṛṣṭaketu→Haryaśva→Maru→Pratipaka→Kṛtiratha→Devamīdha→Viṣṭa→Mahādṛti→Kṛtirāta→Mahāromā→Svarṇaromā→Hrasvaromā→Sīradhvaja (Sītā's father)→Kusādhvaja→Dharmadhvaja→

Kṛtadhvaja ↓ Keśidhvaja ↓ Bhānumān→Śatadyumna→Śūci→Sanadvāja→Urdhvaketu→Aja →Puruṣit→Ariṣṭanemi→Śrutāyu→Supārīvaka→Citraratha→ Kṣemardhi→Samaratha→Satyaratha→Upaguru→Upagupta→ Vasvananta→Yuyudha→Subhāṣaṇa→Śruta Jaya→Yijāya→Rta→ Śunaka→Vitahavya→Dhṛti→Bahulāśva→Kṛti→Mahāvāsī.	Mitadhvaja ↓ Khāṇḍikya
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2. Nimi (v.l. Nemi) is a famous philosopher-king more popular with non-Brahmanical sects which are anti-sacrifice and pro-recluse types of life. Restricting ourselves to the Brahmanical *purāṇas*, we find the Nimi-legend in *Matya P.* 61.32-34, *Vāyu P.* 89.1-4. (The whole chapter tallies with the Bh.P.), *Viṣṇu p.* 4.5.1-15 (the whole prose chapter seems to be the basis of this ch. in the Bh.P.), *Vālmiki Rām. Uttara.* 55-4-21 and canto 57. The curse-episode whereby Nimi left off his physical body and refused to return seems to be an effort at popular etymologies of the capital town "Mithilā" of the country 'Videha', and the word 'Nimiṣa' (winking of the eyes). The special feature of the Mithilā kings was their expertise in philosophy and yoga which as *Viṣṇu P.* 4.5.34 puts it : *prāyogāḥ ātma-vidyāś-rayino bhāṣāḥ bhavanti*. Generally these kings resorted to the science of the Soul (spiritual lore). The Bh. P. in the last verse of this ch. endorses the same view, though it gives the credit to the grace of Yājñavalkya, the expert yogin.

holder (Nimi, the performer of the sacrifice) kept silent. He (Vasiṣṭha) finished the sacrifice of Indra.

3. Nimi, himself a thoughtful philosopher, knew how life is transitory and proceeded with the sacrifice with the help of other sacrificial priests, while his preceptor did not return (was absent).

4. The preceptor returned after concluding Indra's sacrifice. Perceiving this disobedience on the part of his disciple, he cursed : 'Let the body of Nimi who conceitedly regards himself as a learned man, fall'.

5. Nimi reciprocated the imprecation of his preceptor who violated the path of righteousness : "May your body fall, as you do not know what is *dharma* due to covetousness".

6. With these words Nimi, who was proficient in spiritual lore cast off his body. My great grand-father¹ Vasiṣṭha was born of Urvaśī from Mitra and Varuṇa.

7. Preserving Nimi's body in fragrant balms, the great sages, at the conclusion of the sacrificial session, spoke to the celestials who assembled there for the sacrifice.

8. "If ye Lords are (propitiated and) pleased, the body of the king be resuscitated". "Amen ! Be it so", said the gods. The soul of Nimi resorted to his *liṅga-Śarīra* and spoke loudly, "Let me have no bondage of the physical body".

9. Being afraid of separation from it, sages do not wish to have any contact (or union) with the body, but they devote themselves to the lotus-like feet of Hari (to escape from *Samsāra*).

10. I am not desirous of re-entering into the body which brings misery, grief and fear. It is because of the physical body that the death threatens the *jīva* on all sides and the peril of death is everywhere, as the fish have water on all sides.

Gods said :

11. "Oh incorporeal Nimi ! May you live at your free will in the eyes of embodied beings." Nimi thus took his

¹. Actually 'great-great-grandfather'. The genealogy being—
Vasiṣṭha→Śakti→Parāśara→Vyāsa→Suka.

place in the bodies of creatures, and is indicated by the opening and closing of eyelids.

12. Considering the fearful consequences of anarchy on the human beings, the great sages churned the body of Nimi and a son was born of him.

13. On account of this miraculous birth (or by being the founder of a dynasty), he became known as *Janaka* and was called "Vaideha" as he was produced from a life-less body or an incorporeal being, and 'Mithila' ('Mithi' in other *Purāṇas*) as he got his birth out of churning (of Nimi's body). And the city of Mithilā was built up by him.¹

14. Janaka's son was Udāvasu of whom was born Nandivardhana; his son was Suketu (Sukeśa) who gave birth to Devarāta, Oh King !

15. From him was born Bṛhadratha, whose son was Mahāvīrya, the father of Sudhṛt; from him sprang up Dhṛṣṭaketu; his son was Haryaśva, whose son was Maru.

16. Maru's son was Pratipaka whence was born Kṛti; his son was Devamīḍha whose son was Viśruta, the father of Mahādṛti.

17. His son was Kṛtirāta whose son was Mahāromā; his son was Svarṇaromā from whom was born Hrasvaromā.

18. From him sprang up Sīradhvaja, who while ploughing the earth for sacrifice, Sītā (the consort of Rāma) was born (discovered) at the point of the ploughshare. He is hence remembered as Sīra-dhvaja² (one whose plough gave him celebrity like a flag).

19. From him was born Kuśadhvaja, whose son was Dharmadhvaja. He (Dharma) had two sons called Kṛtadhvaja and Mitadhvaja.

20. From Kṛtadhvaja, Keśidhvaja, and from Mitadhvaja, Khāṇḍikya were born. The son of Kṛtadhvaja was expert in the spiritual lore, Oh King.

1. Cf. *Vālmiki Rām.*—*Uttara* 57. 19 & 20.

mathanān Mithir ityāhur janajā Janako'bhavat / 19

yasmād Videhāt sambhūto Vaidehas tu tataḥ smṛtaḥ / 20

2. VD. quotes a legend from *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa*, according to which Sītā was originally in the womb of Mandodarī who deposited the foetus in the Kurukṣetra (?) and was discovered by Hrasvaromā.

21. Khāṇḍikya was proficient in the path of action (*karma-mārga*), but being afraid of Keśidhvaja, he ran away (leaving his country), Keśidhvaja had a son called Bhānumān whose son was Sudyumna.

22. His son was Śuci, whose son was Sanadvāja; from Sanadvāja was born Ūrdhvaketu whose son was Aja, who had Purujit as his son.

23. His son was Ariṣṭanemi whose son was Śrutāyu; his son Supārśvaka gave birth to Citraratha, whose son Kṣemardhi was the king of Mithilā.

24. From him Samaratha whose son was Satyaratha; from him sprang Vpaguru whose son was Upagupta who was an *amśa* of the Fire-god.

25. His son was Vasvananta, whose son was Yuyudha, from whom was born Subhāṣaṇa; his son was Śruta whose son was Jaya, the father of Vijaya. His son was Rta.

26. From him was born Śunaka, whose son was Vīta-havya, from whom was born Dhṛti. From Dhṛti was born Bahulāśva, whose son was Kṛti noted for great self-control.

27. These are verily the kings of Mithilā who were all proficient in the Science of the Soul (Spiritual lore) through the grace of Yājñavalkya the master of *yoga*. Even though they led the life of householders, they were above the conflicting pairs like pleasure and pain, etc.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Description of the Lunar Race

Śrī Śuka Said :

1. After this (description of Mithilā kings), now listen to the hallowing race of Soma (the moon-god), in which will be glorified celebrated kings of auspicious fame, like Purūravas, the son of Ilā (*Aila*),¹ Oh King.

1. Although *Purūravas* is regarded as the son of Ilā, Manu's daughter, it is probable that this human founder of the Lunar race hailed from Ilā-*ṛta*, the region round-about mount Meru.

Madhye toilāṛtāṇaṁ nāma mahā-Meroḥ samantataḥ /—Matsya P. 113.19.

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The Description of the Lunar Race

Śrī Śuka Said :

1. After this (description of Mithilā kings), now listen to the hallowing race of Soma (the moon-god), in which will be glorified celebrated kings of auspicious fame, like Purūravas, the son of Ilā (*Aila*),¹ Oh King.

1. Although *Purūravas* is regarded as the son of Ilā, Manu's daughter, it is probable that this human founder of the Lunar race hailed from Ilā-*ṛta*, the region round-about mount Meru.

Madhye toilāṛtāṇaṁ nāma mahā-Meroḥ samantataḥ /—Matsya P. 113.19.

2. The creator (god *Brahmā*), born out of the lotus which was grown out of the deep pool-like navel of the Supreme Person of innumerable (lit. thousands of) heads, had a son called Atri, who was equal to his father in excellent qualities.

3. Wonderfully enough a Son called Soma was born out of his tears of joy, and hence he became an embodiment of nectar. He was appointed as the protector (or king) of *Brāhmaṇas*, (medicinal) plants and herbs and hosts of constellations and stars, by god *Brahmā*.

4. After conquering the three worlds, he worshipped Lord Viṣṇu by performing a *Rājasūya* sacrifice. Out of high notions about self-importance, he forcibly abducted *Tārā*,¹ the wife of *Bṛhaspati*.

5. Even though he was repeatedly and earnestly requested by *Bṛhaspati*, the preceptor of gods, out of arrogance, he refused to restore her (to *Bṛhaspati*). On this issue was fought a battle between gods and demons.

6. Out of hatred against *Bṛhaspati*, *Śukra* along with *Asuras*, espoused the cause of Soma, the Lord of stars, while god *Śiva* surrounded by his hosts of goblins took the side of *Bṛhaspati*, his preceptor's son.²

7. The great *Indra*, accompanied by all the hosts of gods, followed his preceptor (*Bṛhaspati*). Thus, for the sake of *Tārā*, a great battle was fought, resulting in the destruction of gods and demons.

8. The Creator of the Universe (god *Brahmā*) was then appealed to in this matter by *Aṅgiras* (*Bṛhaspati*'s father). *Brahmā* threatened Soma and made him restore *Tārā* to her husband who found her to be pregnant.

9. (*Bṛhaspati* ordered *Tārā*): "Cast off, uproot from my field (i.e. get aborted) what has been sown there by others

Roughly this corresponds to the region round modern Pamirs. *Purūrasas* and his descendants had contacts with 'gods' who are now identified as Aryans who inhabited the northern part of *Pamirs* or *Uttara Kuru*—vide *D.P.Mitra—Proto. Hist. of India*, ch.I.

1. This is a symbolism, rooted in the vedic doctrine of Soma. For details vide *Agrawal—M.P. A study*, pp. 130-31.

2. God *Śiva*'s preceptor was sage *Aṅgiras*, the father of *Bṛhaspati*—*ŚR.*—

(or enemies), oh wicked-minded woman. I shall not reduce you to ashes as you are a woman, and I am desirous of having an issue (through you)¹, oh good lady !”

9A. To her was born a son of golden complexion, the destroyer of Dasyus (or evil beings).

10. Overwhelmed with shame, Tārā delivered a son who was lustrous like gold in complexion.² And both Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, and Soma desired to have the son as his own (as a *kṣetrāja* son—born of his field, viz. wife in the case of the former, and as a *vīryāja* son—born of his own semen—in the case of the latter)³

11. While they (Bṛhaspati and Soma) were wrangling vociferously, “This (son) is mine and not yours”, sages and gods enquired (of Tārā), but through sense of shame, she kept mum.

12. Enraged at the sham modesty of his mother (Tārā), the son exploded, “Why don’t you speak, you woman of immoral behaviour? Confess to me immediately your sin”.

12A.* (Although you deserve that punishment) I shall not burn you to ashes (with a curse) for concealing your sinful act (as after all you are my mother). But god Brahmā censured the audacious reviler in her presence.

13. God Brahmā then invited her aside, and consoling her in camera, he (sympathetically) enquired. With great hesitation and slowly, she confessed in a low tone, “Soma’s.” And immediately Soma took possession of the child.

14. The self-born god (Brahmā) gave the child the name Budha (the intelligent and wise). By the penetrating intelligence and deep wisdom of his son Budha, the moon-god, the king of stars, became highly delighted.

15-16. As already narrated (vide Supra 9.1.35) ‘Purūravas was born of Budha and Ilā. On hearing of the personal charms, excellences, generosity, nobility of character, affluence

1. And as there is no son to ensure the continuity of my family—VR.

2. v.l. *janaka-prabham*—was like his father in complexion and beauty.

3. With due respect to these annotators, I fail to understand why god Brahmā took Tārā into confidence to ascertain who was the real father of the child.—The Translator.

* This verse is noted by VR also.

and deeds of valour as extolled by the celestial sage Nārada in the palace of Indra (the king of gods), the celestial nymph Ūrvaśī was afflicted by shafts of the god of love, and she approached Purūravas.¹

17. Being reduced to the status of human beings due to the curse of Mitra and Varuṇa, and hearing (the report that) that great personage was beautiful like the god of Love incarnate, she mustered sufficient courage, and presented herself to his presence.

18. With his eyes fully blooming with great joy at her sight, and with his hair standing on their end (with ecstatic delight), the king spoke to her softly in winsome words.

The King said :

19. Welcome is your arrival, Oh beautiful lady. Be pleased to take a (comfortable) seat. What can we do for you ? Enjoy yourself fully with me. Let our mutual enjoyment of love last for innumerable years.

Ūrvaśī replied :

20. “Whose mind and eye will not be attracted by and fixed on you, oh charming Prince ? Having caught a glimpse of

1. This story (of Purūravas and Ūrvaśī) is an elaboration of the dialogue between Purūravas and Ūrvaśī recorded in RV. 10.95. Many verses from that *Sūkta* are assimilated *verbatim* in the Bh.P. e.g. RV. 10.95. 1, 14, 15. The textual similarity has been noted by all commentators. VJ. however is more elaborate in this respect. Even an ordinary reader will hear the echo of RV.10.95.1 (repeated in *Satapatha Br.* 11.5.1-6)

*haye jāye manasā tiṣṭha ghore /
vacāṁsi miśrā kṛṇavāvahai nu //*

in Bh.P.9.14.34

*aho jāye tiṣṭha tiṣṭha ghore na tyaktum arhasi /
mām tvam adyāpyanirortya vacāṁsi kṛṇavāvahai //*

If we accept the hypothesis of Rajaram Shastri Bhagawat who, in 1907, showed in his *Key to Interpret Veda*, that Devas were a race of men and Indra their leader's designation (and there is no reason to disbelieve it as scholars like R.N.Dandekar, D.D.Kosambi endorsed it independently), and M.Ali's identification of Kirghizia, Samarkand (Sogdiana of the Greeks) and Turkmenistan with *Deva-loka* (*The Geography of the Purāṇas*, pp. 63-83), the contract marriage between a lady from Ūr (Ūr-vaśī) and a king hailing from Ilāvṛta—Aila Purūravas, appears quite a human episode with historical basis. The geographical vicinity of his kingdom to Deva-loka made it possible for him and his descendants to fight as allies of Indra.

your bosom (lit. having approached your bosom) I become overpowered with the desire of enjoying life with you, and lose the control over my mind.

21. Oh King ! Be pleased to protect the two lambs as my pledges. Oh respector of the respectable ! I shall enjoy life fully with you. For he who (by his qualities of beauty etc.) appears praise-worthy (to a woman) is remembered (ordained in the *Smṛti* texts) as acceptable to women.

22. Oh warrior King ! My food will consist of ghee only. And I shall not see you without clothes except on the occasion of sexual intercourse." The noble-minded king agreed to the conditions.

23. "Oh what elegant form ! How noble sentiment, that enchants the entire humanity ! What man will not attend upon a goddess who presents herself of her own accord."

24. In her company she offered him all pleasures worthy of him. The eminent person (king Purūravas) enjoyed with her at will, and to the full, in the pleasure gardens of gods such as Caitraratha (the garden of Kubera).

25. Enjoying amorous pleasures with the goddess (or the queen) whose person was fragrant like lotus-filaments, and being enraptured by the sweet smell of her mouth, he revelled many years delightfully with her.

26. Not seeing Ūrvaśī (in his court) and feeling, "My assembly does not look very charming without Ūrvaśī," Indra directed Gandharvas (to bring her).

27. Approaching at dead of night when the world was steeped in darkness, and through their Māyā, they stole the two rams which were pledged for safe custody with the king, by his queen Ūrvaśī.

28. Hearing the bleating of her son-like rams, as they were being carried away, queen Ūrvaśī lamented loudly, "I am undone by this sheepish husband, lacking in manliness but posing vaingloriously as a hero.

29. Trusting in him, I am ruined and despoiled of my children (—like lambs) by robbers. Like a woman who is full of fear at night, he sleeps terror-stricken at night, and poses himself as a man when it is (broad) day (—light).

29A. Let me be free ! Leave me immediately ! Take away your arm that clasps around me. He is too timid to leave me, and cunning, and addicted to licentious sexual pleasure only."

30. Being pierced with these verbal shafts, and like an elephant pricked with goads, he caught hold of his sword and sallied forth in rage, in the dead of night, even though he was naked.

31. The Gandharvas let go the two rams, but flashed out light like lightning, when she caught a glimpse of her husband in a nude state, coming with the two rams (and thus left him).

32. Not finding his wife in the bed, Purūravas, the son of *Ilā*, became despondent. His heart being fixed on her, he was beside himself (with affliction). He ranged over the world (in search of her), like a mad man.

33. (In the course of his wanderings, one day) he happened to see her along with her five female companions with their countenances blooming with delight, on the bank of the Sarasvatī, in Kurukṣetra. Purūravas addressed her the following (persuasive) charming words (recorded in the *Sūkta*, RV 10.95 which is adapted here as follows) :

34. "Oh my beloved wife ! Do stop awhile, wait. Oh cruelhearted one ! It does not behove you to abandon me without giving me pleasure of your company to my satisfaction (or unsated as I am of the pleasures of your company, you ought not to relegate me to terrible misery). Let us (at least) have some (heart to heart) talk.¹

35. If this beautiful body of mine² which has been drawn away to such a far off distance by you, be not the recipient of your favours, it will fall down dead here only,

1. Cf. RV. 10.95.1.

2. Cf. RV. 10.95.14. VJ. reads 'Sudevo'yam' for *Sudeho'yam*, which opens RV 10.95.14 (*Sudevo atra prapatet*). VJ. explains the *Rk* rather than this verse *Sudeva*—This human body which is the tool or means of getting knowledge (*gati-lakṣaṇa-jñāna-sādhana*).

VR. explains the v.l. *Sudevo'yam* : Here Purūravas addresses his own soul—the Inner Controller. He construes *grāhṛa* (greedy, voracious) as the adj. qualifying *Vṛkas*—wolves in the form of sense-organs which afflict the individual soul.

and wolves and vultures will prey upon it, Oh my queen (Oh goddess) .

Ūrvaśī replied :

36. Do not die. You are a man (as such you must be courageous) . Let not these wolves (in the form of passionately craving senses) devour you today (Control your senses). The heart of women like the heart of wolves is friendly to none.¹

37. Women are merciless, cruel, jealous and mind no risk for the object of their love. Even for a trifling matter, they will kill their trustful husband or unsuspecting brother.

38. After inspiring confidence in gullible persons (through deceitful behaviour), they snap asunder all friendly relations. The unchaste women, being wantonly wayward in behaviour, hunt (long) after a new lover (every now and then).

39. My lord, at the end of the year, you will stay with me for one night. You will have other children also, (in addition to the one I carry).

40. Noticing that the queen was pregnant, he returned to his capital. At the end of the year, he came back again to find Ūrvaśī, as the mother of a hero.

41. Full of delight to have her again, he spent that night with her. Then finding him disheartened at the prospect of impending separation, Ūrvaśī advised him :

42. "You propitiate these Gandharvas (by praise), and they will be pleased to give me unto you."

Being pleased with his laudatory prayer, the Gandharvas donated him a fire-vase (for fire-worship which will lead him to the region of Ūrvaśī) Oh King. (Being blinded with passion) he believed that fire-vessel to be (the means of securing) Ūrvaśī, and roved in the forest with it, only to discover it to be a vase for carrying fire, and not Ūrvaśī.

43. Depositing the vase in the forest, he returned to his palace, and contemplated throughout the night on Ūrvaśī. In

1. The verses echoes the text of RV. 10.95.15 while VV. 36-39 explain it. Cf.

*Purā-ravo mā mṛthā, mā pra pāto
mā tvā vṛkāṣo aśivāsa u kṣan /
na vai straiṇāni sakhyāni santi
sālvṛkāṇām hṛdayāneyā //*—RV. 10.95.15

the meanwhile (the Kṛta age ended and) the Tretā Age set in, and the knowledge of trinity of Vedas which contained prescriptions, for the ritualistic performance of sacrifices, revealed itself in his mind.

44. Returning to the spot (in the forest) where the firevase was kept (by him), he noticed an *asvattha* (Peepal) tree grown out from the 'womb' of the *Śamī* tree. With a desire to attain to the region of *Ūrvaśī*, he made two *araṇis* (churning sticks) out of them (with a view to enkindle fire by friction).

45. Reciting the *mantra* 'Ūrvaśyām urasi Purūravāh' (Purūravas is on Ūrvaśī), the powerful king contemplated the lower piece of *araṇi* (churning stick) as *Ūrvaśī* and the upper *araṇi* to be himself, and the intermediate piece between them as their issue (son), (the king churned out the fire while saying the *mantra* prescribed for such frictional fire).

46. By that friction of churning was enkindled a fire (flame) which is called *Ĵātaveda* (that from which wealth and every enjoyable object is produced). It was consecrated by the method prescribed in the three Vedas. It assumed three forms¹—*āhavanīya*, *gārhapatya* and *dakṣiṇāgni*. As it, with its three forms, leads to the celestial regions, it was adopted as his son by the king Purūravas.

47. Wishing to attain to the region of *Ūrvaśī* he, (Purūravas), worshipped with that sacrificial fire (produced by attrition from *araṇis*) the glorious Lord Hari, who is the presiding Deity of sacrifices and is Supra-sensuous and who represents all gods in His Person.

48. Formerly (in the Kṛta Age), there was only one Veda viz. the sacred syllable *OM* which formed the basis of all speech; there was but one God Nārāyaṇa and no other; there was only one Fire (and not three) and only one caste viz. *Han̥sa*.

49. (In the Kṛta Age), all people had the predominance

1. These are the three forms of householder's perpetual sacrificial fires : The *āhavanīya* is the eastern. The *Gārhapatya* is another perpetual fire transmitted from one generation to another and from this, fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted; the *dakṣiṇāgni* is the sacred fire placed to the south.

of *Sattva* and hence were devoted to spiritual meditation. In the Tretā Age, *rajas* being the dominant quality, the path of ritualistic acts based on the three Vedas became evolved. Since the time of Purūravas, when the Tretā Age dawned, there came into existence the trinity of the Vedas (and the path of ritualistic action based on them), Oh King. As the King accepted the Fire-god as his son (i.e. maintained the sacrificial fire like unto his son), the king attained to the realm of Gandharvas.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Story of Paraśurāma. Sahasrārjuna Slain

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Purūravas, the son of Ilā, had six sons by Ūrvaśī, Oh King. They were Āyu, Śrutāyu, Satyāyu, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya.

2. Śrutāyu's son was Vasumān; Śrutañjaya was Satya's son. Raya's son was Eka, and Jaya's son was Amita.

3. Vijaya had a son called Bhīma whose son was Kañcana from whom was born Hotraka. His son was Jahnu who took all the waters of the Gaṅgā in his folded palms, and drank up the whole river. Jahnu's son was Puru, whose son was Balāka and his son was Ajaka.

4. From him (Ajaka) was born Kuśa who had four sons viz. Kuśāmbu, Tanaya (v. l. Mūrtaya), Vasu and Kuśanābha. Kuśāmbu's son was Gādhi.

5. A Brāhmaṇa called Ṛcika sought Gādhi's daughter, princess Satyavati in marriage. Considering that the bridegroom was unworthy of her, king Gādhi spoke to Ṛcika of the Bhṛgu clan :

6. "We belong to the race of Kuśa, and as such one thousand horses white and bright like the moon, but with one black ear be given as the dowry for the girl."

7. When he was thus replied, he understood the intention of Gādhī. Having approached Varuṇa, he brought and delivered the required horses of the said description and married that lovely princess.

8. The sage Ṛcika was solicited by his wife and by his mother-in-law both of whom were desirous of having a son. He prepared *Caru*—an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled in butter and milk for presentations to gods—consecrated them severally—the one, for his wife, with *Brāhma mantras*, and the other, for his mother-in-law, consecrated with *Kṣātra mantras*. And then the sage went for having his bath.

9. In the meanwhile (during his absence), Satyavatī, was requested by her mother (to give her) the *Caru* (sacri-ficial boiled rice) meant for Satyavatī herself, considering that to be superior. She gave that *Caru* (meant for herself) to her mother, and ate the one apportioned for her mother.

10. On learning of this (exchange of *Carus*), the sage told his wife, “Alas ! What grievous mistake you have committed ! Your son will be a terrible chastiser (like god of death), and your brother will be a prominent knower of *Brahman* (the Vedas or the Supreme Deity).”

11. Propitiated by persuasive prayer that such even-tuality should not materialise, sage Ṛcika of the Bhṛgu clan said, “If so, your grandson will be of that nature”. Then Jamadagni was born.

12. Then Satyavatī was transformed into a very sacred river Kauṣikī, the sanctifier of the world. The tradition goes that Jamadagni married Reṇukā, the daughter of (King) Reṇu.

13. They say that several sons like Vasumat and others were begotten on her by the sage Jamadagni of the Bhṛgu clan. The youngest of them born was the great celebrity Rāma (Paraśu-rāma).

14*. They say that he was a ray (*amśa*) of Vāsudeva (Lord Viṣṇu) and the exterminator of the Haihaya clan. He

*The Bh.P. contains two main legends from the life of Paraśurāma viz. 1. The slaying of Kārtavīrya or Sahasrārjuna and 2. Beheading his mother and brothers and reviving them.

The legends of Paraśurāma narrated here are found in MBH Ādi. 2.4-7 64.4; Āśvamedhika chs. 29 & 30 and in Brahmdā P. II.26-40.

is said to have rendered this earth devoid of Kṣatriyas twenty-one times.

15. He destroyed the wicked Kṣatriya race turned inimical to Brāhmaṇas, and constituted as if a burden to the earth. Even on the slightest provocation or commission of a slight offence, he killed the Kṣatriyas enveloped by (i.e. full of) *rajas* and *tamas*.

The king (Parikṣit) asked :

16. What offence against that glorious sage (Paraśu-rāma) was committed by Kṣatriyas of uncontrolled nature that led to the repeated extermination of the entire Kṣatriya race (by him) ?

Śrī Śuka narrated :

17. Arjuna, a prominent Kṣatriya and the ruler of Haihayas (a branch of Yādavas) propitiated Datta (Dattātreya), a partial (*aṁśa*) incarnation of Lord Nārāyaṇa, by rendering to him various acts of service (and worship).

18-19. Through him (Datta's grace), he secured a thousand arms, unassailable formidability against the enemies, uninterrupted and insuperable power of senses and organs, splendour, affluence, glory, prowess, fame, physical strength, mastery over *yoga* including supreme spiritual powers characterised by the capacity to assume atomic size etc. His movements and speed being thus unimpeded, he moved about the world free as a wind.

20. While sporting in the waters of the Narmadā, in company of (lit. surrounded by) jewel-like (charming) women, and wearing the Vaijayantī wreath (of nine well-known gems) he, being intoxicated with pride, obstructed the course of the river with his one thousand arms.

21. (Rāvaṇa was on his expedition of the world conquest and was camping on the bank of the Narmadā, near Māhiṣmatī, Sahasrārjuna's capital and was then engaged in worship). Finding his encampment flooded with the waters of the river flowing in the opposite direction, Rāvaṇa, the tenheaded demon, who regarded himself as the only hero in the world,

did not tolerate that (display of) prowess (by Sahasrārjuna).

22. When Rāvaṇa (tried to attack him during the water-sports and thus) offended Sahasrārjuna, he (Rāvaṇa) was sportively seized in the very presence of women, and was kept captive like a monkey at his capital Māhiṣmatī and was (ultimately) let off as a worthless fellow.

23. On one occasion, while Arjuna was on a hunting expedition in an impassable forest, he perchance, happened to come to the precincts of the hermitage of the sage Jamadagni.

24. Through the grace of his Kāmadhenu (wish-yielding cow), the sage whose wealth was (nothing but his) penance, however, offered a warm reception (with due formalities) to the king, his ministers, men in his army and even the animals that carried them.

25. Finding the affluence of the sage far surpassing his own, the warrior who was accompanied by his Haihaya clansmen, cherished covetousness for the wish-yielding cow which was essential for maintaining sacrificial fires (*agni-hotra*), and did not appreciate the warm hospitality.

26. Out of arrogance and pride, he commanded his men to take away the sage's cow of plenty (which yielded milk, ghee etc. as oblations to sacrificial fires), and they forcibly carried off the screaming cow and her calf to (the king's capital) Māhiṣmatī.

27. After the king's departure, (Paraśu)-Rāma arrived at the hermitage. Being informed of the act of wickedness of the king, he got enraged like a serpent that is hit.

28. Equipping himself with his formidable axe, a bow with quivers and a shield, the irresistible hero rushed after him like a lion chasing a king elephant of a herd.

29. As Arjuna was entering his capital, he noticed the prominent Bhṛgu, Paraśurāma bearing a bow and armed with arrows and an axe, wearing a black deer-skin and with matted hair resplendent like the sun, rushing (after him) with an irresistible force.

30. (To oppose him) Arjuna directed seventeen very formidable divisions (*akṣauhiṇī*)¹ consisting of elephants, chari-

1. For the details of the strength of an *akṣauhiṇī* vide Bh.P.VII.I.P. 71 fn. No. 271.

ots, cavalry and infantry equipped with maces, swords, arrows, javelins, *Śataghñis* (a rocket-like missile or a cylindrical block of wood studded with iron pikes) and darts or lances (*Śaktis*). But the glorious Lord Rāma singlehandedly slaughtered them all.

31. In whatever direction, Rāma, the destroyer of hostile forces, moved with the velocity of the wind and mind, striking down with his axe, there fell down on the ground enemies with their arms, thighs and necks chopped off and their charioteers and animals slain.

32. Perceiving that his army is laid low on the battlefield in the mire caused by streams of blood, with their shields, flags, bows and bodies minced down by the axe and shafts of Rāma, the Haihaya King Arjuna, rushed forward in rage.

33. Now Arjuna (being thousand-armed) simultaneously fitted shafts on five hundred bows in order to discharge them at Rāma. But Rāma, the undisputed leader of all who ever wielded missiles, with one bow in his hand at once—synchronously—cut down all Arjuna's bow and arrows with his shafts.

34. In that fight, while Arjuna was rushing towards Rāma uprooting rocks and trees with his (numerous) hands (to hurl them at Rāma), Rāma forestalled him and quickly cut down his arms like the hoods of serpents, with his axe of a hard and sharp edge.

35. After lopping off all his arms, Rāma chopped off Arjuna's head like the peak of a mountain. When their father was thus killed, Arjuna's ten thousand sons ran away in panic.

36. Rāma, the subduer of hostile forces, restored the cow (essential for the maintenance of *Agnihotra*) along with her calf. Returning to his hermitage, he duly presented the afflicted cow to his father.

37. Rāma, described to his father and brothers (Arjuna's moves) and his exploits; but the sage Jamadagni (disapprovingly) remarked :

38. "(Dear) Rāma ! Oh Rāma of mighty arms ! You have committed a sin. You have unnecessarily killed a king (a god among men) who represents all gods in his person.

39. Oh dear child ! We are Brāhmaṇas ! We have become objects of veneration and worship through forbearance,

just as god Brahmā, the creator of the world, has attained to the status of Paramēsthī (the supreme ruler of the world) through forgiveness.

40. It is on account of forgiveness and patience that the Brāhmanic glory shines like the splendour of the sun. Even glorious Lord Hari, the Ruler of the Universe, become easily pleased with persons of forgiving spirits.

41. Slaying of a king whose head is consecrated in coronation, is more heinous than that of killing a Brāhmaṇa. Oh child ! Now expiate your sin by bathing in holy waters, devoting your mind (all the while) to Lord Viṣṇu (*Acyuta*).''

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Story of Paraśurāma¹ (concluded)

Śrī Śuka continued:

1. Rāma who was thus admonished by his father, consented (with words) 'Be it so'. After spending one year in visiting holy places, he returned to his hermitage, Oh princes of the Kuru race !

1. The legend of Paraśurāma ends in this chapter. The Bh.P., like the MBH, seems to be composed under the influence of Bhṛgu and this legend may be called the Bhṛgu version of the feud between the Bhṛgu and Haihayas. Bhṛgu (Greek: Phrugus) as the name of the clan suggests, probably hailed from Phrygia in Western Asia Minor. From the Purāṇic accounts, they seem to have settled on the Western Coast in India and Bhṛgukaccha (Broach, Gujrat), Śūrpāraka (Sopārā, Thana District, Maharashtra) appear to be the centres of their settlement. They were a sea power. Till the time of Kṛtavīrya (Arjuna's father), Bhṛgu and Haihayas seemed to be on good terms. But the Haihayas' policy of expansion had long back alerted Bhṛgu, and their leaders contracted matrimonial alliances with the royal houses of Kānyakubja and Ayodhyā by the marriage of Rclka and Jamadagni with the princesses thereof. Arjuna, Kṛtavīrya's son was an able, ambitious ruler. He seems to have raided Jamadagni's 'hermitage' (!)—if a centre which can receive and feed a king and his army in a royal way, and if its affluence surpasses a sovereign emperor's palace, can be called so—probably to forestall Bhṛgu

2. On one occasion, when Reṇukā went to the Gaṅgā (for bringing water), she happened to see Citraratha, the king of Gandharvas, adorned with a wreath of lotuses, sporting with celestial nymphs (in the water).

3. Reṇukā who came to the river to fetch water, conceived just a passing longing for Citraratha, and forgot the time fixed for the *Homa* (sacrificial worship) while gazing at the sporting king.

4. Realizing the delay caused thereby, and being afraid of the sage's (Jamadagni's) curse, she hastened back, kept the pitcher of water before him, and remained standing with folded palms.

5. Gathering the faithlessness of his wife, the sage got enraged and commanded, "Oh sons ! Kill this sinful woman". Despite this order, none obeyed.

6. Rāma who was fully aware of the powers of the sage through his spiritual meditation and penance, promptly despatched his brothers along with his mother, when directed to do so by his father.

7. Jamadagni, the son of Satyavatī, was pleased with him (Paraśurāma) and asked him to seek a boon. Rāma re-

designs just on the borders of his kingdom. Though under the able leadership of Rāma, the northern allies of Bhṛgu including kings of Vaiśālī, Videha, Kānyakubja and Ayodhyā defeated Haihayas probably in twenty-one battles, and though Rāma was able to kill Arjuna in a surprise attack while the latter was returning from his hunting expedition, the Bhṛgu had ultimately to migrate to the north India and spread along the southern part of the western coast of India. Whatever may be the actual historical facts of this traditional feud, it was *not* a contest between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas on caste basis, as some misrepresent it. For, right from the days of Cyavana Bhārgava, Bhṛgu had marriage alliances with Kṣatriyas, and Rāma's mother, Rāma's grandmother (Rcika's wife) were Kṣatriya princesses. The real cause was economic and political rivalry, and attempts of Haihayas to spread their kingdom to the Doab and other parts of northern India. After Paraśurāma's retirement, Haihayas consolidated their position in Malwa, Rajasthan and Western India and carried their raids against Ayodhyā, Kānyakubja, Kosal and Kāśī. As irony of fate would have it, the last Haihaya prince Viti-hotra on the throne of Benares, had to seek refuge with a Bhārgava sage and Viti-hotra became a Brāhmaṇa. ~~For~~ him little is heard about Haihayas—*Vedic Age*, pp.283-87 (History and Culture of Indian People Vol.I).

quested the boon that all those who had been killed, should be restored to life, and should not remember who slew them.

8. Immediately they got up hale and hearty as if from a sound sleep. Rāma had killed his kith and kin (mother and brothers), as he had known the spiritual power of his father.

9. Oh king ! The sons of Arjuna who, being vanquished by the valour of Rāma, had fled, continued to brood over the killing of their father (by Rāma) and found no mental peace anywhere.

10. On one occasion, when Paraśurāma along with his brothers had left for the forest, they (the sons of Arjuna), desirous of avenging (for the killing of their father by Rāma), found a (favourable) opportunity, and entered the hermitage.

11. Determined to murder Jamadagni, they saw the sage sitting with his mind concentrated upon the glorious Lord of excellent renown, in the sacrificial hall, and killed him.

12. Though piteously entreated by the helpless mother of Paraśurāma, those hard-hearted dregs of the Kṣatriya community, forcibly severed his head and carried it away.

13. Overwhelmed with grief and deep anguish, and beating herself with her own hands, the chaste lady Reṇukā screamed loudly, "Oh Rāma ! Rāma ! come (quickly) Oh child".

14. Hearing from afar, a distressful call "Oh Rāma", Rāma hastened to the hermitage to find his father killed.

15. Overwhelmed and confounded with sorrow, rage, impetuosity, affliction and intense grief, Rāma bewailed "Oh saintly father ! Oh righteous-most sire ! Leaving us behind here, you proceeded to heaven."

16. After lamenting thus, Paraśurāma entrusted the body of his father to his brothers. Taking his axe with him, he determined to exterminate the Kṣatriya race entirely.

17. Sallying forth to the city of Māhiṣmatī, the splendour of which was already lost due to the murder of a Brāhmaṇa (Jamadagni), he built up (as it were) a huge mountain of the heads of the sons of Sahasrārjuna in the heart of the city.

18-19. With the blood of those (Haihayas), he created a terrible river which aroused fear in the heart of the enemies.

of Brāhmaṇas. When the Kṣatriyas had taken to wicked (inauspicious) ways, he made the murder of his father as a cause of action and completely annihilated the Kṣatriyas thrice seven times¹ from the earth, and caused (the creation of) pools of blood² in Samantapañcaka (Kurukṣetra) Oh King.

20. Recovering the head of his father (taken away by the sons of Arjuna), he joined it to the trunk of his father's body. Keeping it on the Kuśa grass, he worshipped by performing sacrifices, the Deity, his own Soul, who represents all gods in his person.

21. (It is verily reported that) as *dakṣiṇā* (gift for performance of sacrifices), he gave the eastern quarter (the eastern part of the earth) to the *Hotṛ*, the southern quarter to the *Brahmā*, the western direction to the *Adhvaryu* and the northern direction to the *Udgātṛ*.

22. To others he donated (lands in) the intermediate quarters, and the central portion of the earth to sage Kāśyapa, Āryāvarta (region between the Himalayas and the Vindhya mountain) to the sacrificial supervisors (*upadraṣṭas*) and the land lying beyond that to *Sadasyas* (judges or superintendents of sacrifices.).

23. Having washed off all his sins in the conclusive ablution at the end of the sacrifice in the river Sarasvatī, the embodiment of the Veda, he shone resplendent like the sun with clouds dispelled.

24. Having regained his (spiritual) body characterised by pure consciousness, Jamadagni became the seventh star³ in the sphere of sages in the sky (*Ursa Major*), and was worshipped by Rāma.

25. (It is said that) verily this son of Jamadagni, the glorious Rāma of lotus-like eyes, will be the propagator of the

1. ŚR informs us that according to tradition, Reṇukā beat her breast twenty one times, and hence Rāma destroyed Kṣatriyas as many times.

2. VR. states that the v.1 *hradān nava* is wrong, as the place is called *S(y)amanta-pañcaka* and not *S-navaka* and the MBH. *Ādi.* records *S-pañcaka* as the name 2.4-11.

3. VC. gives the list of seven sages presiding over the seven stars in the constellation *Ursa Major* as follows : Kāśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Kṛivāmitra, Gautama, Bharadvāja and Jamadagni.

Vedas—one of the seven sages, the authorities over the Vedas—in the coming *Manvantara*.

26. Even today he resides on the Mahendra mountain. He has laid down the rod of punishment, and is now perfectly serene in mind. His deeds are being sung by Siddhas, Gandharvas and Cāraṇas.

27. In this way, the glorious Lord Hari, the Ruler of the world, the very Soul of (all beings in) the Universe incarnated Himself in the Bhṛgu clan, and lightened the burden of the earth by killing several times the *Kṣatriyas* (or lords of men).

28. Gādhi (the King of Kānyakubja) begot a son (Viśvāmitra) whose superb majestic personality was brilliant like a blazing fire. By virtue of his asceticism and austere penance, he transcended his *Kṣatriya* status and attained the glory of Brahmanism.

29. Viśvāmitra had a hundred sons. Out of them Madhucchandas was the middle, but all of them are known by the same (group) name Madhucchandas, Oh King !

30. Having adopted as his son Śunaḥśepa, the son of Ajīgarta of the Bhṛgu clan, who was given to him by gods and hence named as *Devarāta*, he told his sons, ‘Let this (Śunaḥśepa) be regarded by you as your eldest (brother).’¹

31. It was verily the same person who was sold as a human ‘sacrificial beast’ (victim) for the sacrifice of Hariścandra² and who through his prayer³ to gods and Lords of creation (like Varuṇa) was released from the bondage of cords (that tied him to the sacrificial post).

32. He who was protected and given by gods in the sacrifice offered to Varuṇa, came to be known as *Devarāta* among the Gādhi family and that ascetic was known as Śunaḥśepa in the family of Bhṛgus.

33. The brothers who were elder than Madhucchandas did not approve of it (the order of Viśvāmitra to recognize

1. As ŚR. points out, this explains why Devarāta is one of the *Pravara*’s of the Kausika *Gotra*, even though as a rule a *Pravara* belongs to the same *Gotra*.

2. Vide Supra 9.7. 20-21.

3. e.g. Sūktas like RV. 1.25.

Devarāta as their eldest brother). The enraged sage cursed them, “Ye wicked fellows! Be ye all *mlecchas* (outcast barbarians)”.

34. It is reported that, thereupon Madhucchandas along with his fifty brothers submitted, “we shall accept the status and abide by whatever you command us.”

35. To the seer of Vedic *mantras* (Śunaḥśepa) they told him, “We are all your younger brothers.” And thus they recognized him as their eldest brother. Viśvāmitra (being highly pleased) said to his sons, “As you have maintained my respect as your father, and have made me worthy as a father with heroic sons, may you all be blessed with progeny”.

36. “Oh descendents of Kauśika family, this Devarāta is one of you (as a scion of your family); obey his orders.” Viśvāmitra had also other sons viz. Aṣṭaka, Hārīta, Jaya, Kratumat and others.

37. In this way the Kauśika family came to be divided into different branches through the sons of Viśvāmitra, and it had another different *Pravara* due to the adoption of Devarāta.¹

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Lunar Dynasty—The Descendants of Āyu, the Son of Purūravas²

Śrī Śuka said :

1-3. Āyu who was the son of Purūravas, had the following (five) sons—Nahuṣa, Kṣattravṛddha, the valiant Rājī, Rambha and Anenas. Now, Oh emperor, listen to the

1. It appears that there had been different Viśvāmitras in widely distant ages. e.g. Viśvāmitra, the father of Śakuntalā, Viśvāmitra the teacher of Daśaratha's son Rāma, Viśvāmitra the contemporary of Hariścandra, Jamadagni and Śunaḥśepa, and Viśvāmitra and the Dāśarājña. The Purāṇas, however, have rolled these distinct personalities into one, and have caused confusion and chaos among the students of Purāṇas. It is true that there was some rivalry between the Viśvāmitras and Vasiṣṭhas in the RV, but the Purāṇas have added a lot of new material unknown to the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas.

2. This chapter gives the genealogy of Purūravas—especially of the minor branches from Āyu, the son of Purūravas. The history of the descendants of the following four sons of Āyu viz. Kṣattravṛddha, Rambha, Rājī and Anenas is given in this chapter. The history of the main line from Nahuṣa is detailed in the following chapters.

genealogy of Kṣattravṛddha : He had a son Suhotra, who had three sons—Kāśya, Kuśa and Gṛtsamada. From Gṛtsamada was born Śunaka whose son sage Śaunaka was the most prominent authority on the *Ṛgveda* (among its followers).

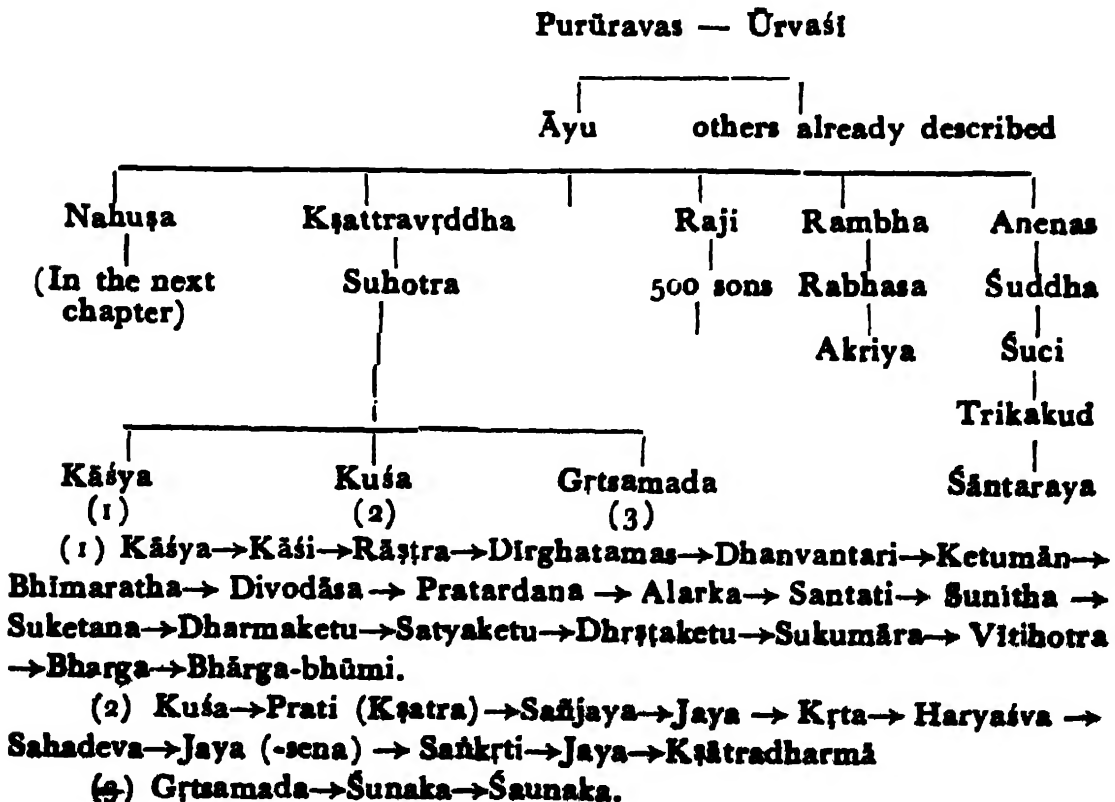
4. Kāśya begot Kāśī, whose son Rāṣṭra was the father of Dīrghatamas. Dhanvantari, the founder of the science of Medicine (*Āyurveda*) was the son of Dīrghatamas.

5. He was a ray (*aṃśa*) of Lord Vāsudeva, the receiver of offerings in sacrifices. His son was Ketumān who gave birth to Bhīmaratha.

6. From him (Bhīmaratha) was born Divodāsa whose son Dyuman was also remembered as Pratardana. He is also called Śatrujit, Vatsa and Ṛtadhvaja. He is celebrated as Kuvalayāśva as well. Of him were born Alarka and others.

7. No king other than Alarka enjoyed (the sovereignty over) this earth for sixty-six thousand years and still preserved his youthfulness (throughout this period).

8. To Alarka was born Santati whose son was Sunītha. From Sunītha sprang up Suketana whose son was Dharmaketu; of him was born Satyaketu.



9. Satyaketu's son was Dhr̥ṣṭaketu of whom was born Sukumāra, the lord of the earth; his son was Vitihotra whose son was Bharga; his son Bhārgabhūmi became a king.

10. The above-mentioned kings are the descendants of Kāśi in the lineage of Kṣattravṛddha.

(Now the genealogy of Rambha, the fourth son of Āyu). The son of Rambha was Rabhasa whose son was Gambhira from whom was born Akriya.

11. Through Akriya's queen started the line of Brāhmaṇas. Now listen to the line of Anenas (the fifth son of Āyu). Anenas' son was Śuddha of whom was born Śuci. His son was Trikakud, also known as Dharma-sārathi.

12. Of him was born Śānta-rayas who being selfcontrolled (or knower of the Soul) had almost accomplished his objective (viz. Final beatitude and was not interested in continuing his race). Raji (the third son of Āyu) had five hundred sons, endowed with immense prowess.

13-16. Entreated by gods, Raji slaughtered the demons and restored the celestial kingdom to Indra. But Indra being afraid of Prahlāda and others, again returned the kingdom of heaven to Raji, clasped his feet and placed himself under Raji's protection (as his son). When the father (Raji) died, his sons, even though solicited (by Indra), refused to return the celestial kingdom to him. (On the contrary) they appropriated to themselves shares obliterated in sacrifice (for Indra). Bṛhaspati, then offered oblations to fire (with malevolent purpose against the sons of Raji and made them stray from the path of religion) and Indra slew them one and all as they swerved from the path (of righteousness) and not a single son (of Raji) survived.¹

From Kuśa, the grandson of Kṣattravṛddha, was born Prati, of whom sprang up Sañjaya whose son was Jaya.

17. Jaya's son was Kṛta, of whom was born the king Haryavana. His son was Sahadeva, who begot Hina, whose son was Jayasena.

18. Jayasena's son was Saṅkṛti whose son Jaya, who, himself a great (chariot-) warrior, followed religiously ordained

1. This episode is confirmed in the *Vāyu P.* 92.76-99; *Matsya P.* 24. 34-48.

path of Kṣattriyas. The kings belonging to the line of Kṣattravṛddha have been described. Now listen to the genealogy of Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The History of Nahuṣa's Line—The Story of Yayāti¹

Sṛī Śuka said :

1. Just as an embodied being is endowed with six senses (five senses *plus* the inner organ, the mind) King Nahuṣa had the following six sons—Yati, Yayāti, Saṁyāti, Āyati, Viyati and Kṛti.

2. Being aware of the consequences of the acceptance of the rulership of a kingdom, Yati did not desire sovereignty offered to him by his father, for (he knew that) by shouldering kingship, a person does not realize his own self.

3. When, due to his misdemeanour towards Indra's queen, Indrāṇī, Nahuṣa was dethroned from his position (as the ruler of the celestial world) and was converted verily into a boa-constrictor by the Brāhmaṇa-sages, Yayāti became a king.

4. Appointing his four younger brothers to govern over the kingdom in four directions (each in one direction), he married the daughter of Śukra (the preceptor of Asuras) and

1. The Yayāti legend—the exchange of Yayāti's age with the youth of his son and his memorable words at the return of the youth and reacceptance of his age at the time of renunciation :

*na jātu kāmāḥ kāmāṇāṁ upabhogena śāmyati /
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate //*

have been immortalized in *MBH. Adi*, chs. 76-81, *Matsya P.* chs. 30-35, *Padma P.* *Bhūmi*, chs. 76-83 (with a Vaiṣṇavite colouring), the *Vāyu P.* ch. 93. The legend in its modern garb is still very popular and a Marāṭhī novel on this legend received a Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha Award—the most honoured and coveted prize in India, this year.

of Vṛṣaparvā, the king of Asuras and thus protected the earth (from his capital).

King Parīkṣit enquired :

5. The venerable Śukra was a Brāhmaṇa sage while Yayāti, the son of king Nahuṣa, was a Kṣatriya by caste. Why and how could such an irregular marriage against the caste-order between a Kṣatriya man and a Brāhmaṇa girl come about ?

Śrī Śuka replied :

6-7. On one occasion, in the company of a thousand lady-friends and Devayānī, the preceptor's daughter, Śarmiṣṭhā, the princess of the great Dānava king Vṛṣaparvā who, though of the weaker sex was imperious by nature, was promenading in the pleasure garden of her capital which was full of blooming flower-trees, and charming with pools, the sandy banks and lotus beds of which were full of sweet humming of bees.

8. Arriving at a pool of water, those lotus-eyed girls left their silken garments on its bank and engaged themselves in water sports sprinkling each other with water.

9. Perceiving that god Śiva accompanied by his Consort Pārvatī, was riding that way on his bull, the ladies forthwith rushed out of the water, and hastened to put on their garments, out of bashfulness.

10. Not knowing that the garments belonged to the preceptor's daughter, Śarmiṣṭhā wore it, thinking it to be her own. Getting enraged thereby, Devayānī spoke as follows :

11. "Oh ! Behold the impropriety of this slave-girl in that, like a bitch carrying away the oblation (meant for gods) in a sacrifice, she wore the garment which was to be put on by us.

12. By us Brāhmaṇas (like god Brahmā, Prajāpatīs like Marīci) has been created this universe through the power of our asceticism and penance; we constitute the mouth of the Supreme Person (i.e. we are born from god's mouth and as such are superior to all, as he gets propitiated when we are feasted to our satisfaction). By us the light of the Supreme

Brahman is conserved (as an object of adoration) in our hearts, and the blessed path of Vedic religion is shown by us.

13. To us (Brāhmaṇas) the Lords of gods, protectors of the world, and even the most purifying, glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Soul of the Universe and the abode of goddess Śrī, pay homage and praise.

14. And among such Brāhmaṇas, we are the descendants of Bhṛgu. Her father, a demon, is our disciple. This unchaste girl has put on the dress meant for us like a Śūdra bearing (reciting) the Veda—(a privilege of the twice-born castes).

15. Thus attacked, Śarmiṣṭhā who angrily sighed heavily like a hissing female serpent, bit her lips and retorted to the spiritual preceptor's daughter who was reproaching her with words of abuse.

16. "Oh ! Beggar-maid, ignoring your own (menial) position, you are vainly boasting yourself. Do you not wait at our house-(door) like a crow or a dog (for crumbs of food) ?"

17. Having reproached the good daughter of her preceptor with such and other harsh words, Śarmiṣṭhā snatched away all her cloths and pushed her into a well.

18. It is traditionally told that when Śarmiṣṭhā returned home, Yayāti who was on the hunting expedition, wanted to drink water, and happened, by chance, to come to that well where he saw her (Devayānī).

19. The merciful king gave his upper garment to the girl who was stark naked, and holding her hand by his own, he lifted her out of water.

20. Devayānī, the daughter of Uśanas (i. e. Śukra) spoke to the king in words steeped in genuine love : "Oh King ! You have accepted my hand, Oh conqueror of inimical cities !"

21. "As my hand has now been accepted by you once, let no one else now take it. This relation of ours is ordained providentially and not through human agency, Oh valiant warrior. It is hence that I could have this sight of yours while clinging to the (walls of the) well.

22. Oh King of powerful arms ! No Brāhmaṇa is destined to accept my hand due to the (reciprocal curse of Kaca the son of Bṛhaspati whom I imprecated initially".¹

23. Yayāti found that the unexpected event was brought about by his destiny and being conscious that now his heart was attached to her, accepted her proposal.

24. When the valiant king departed, Devayānī went to her father crying (all the while) and reported to him all that was said and done by Śarmiṣṭhā.

25. The glorious sage Śukra was deeply agitated at heart. Disparaging the profession of a priest and commending the way of life of a pigeon (which freely gathers its food in the forest—technically known as *Uñccha-vṛtti*—"maintenance by gleanings"), he went out of the city (Vṛṣaparvā's capital) along with his daughter.

26. Knowing that his intention is to conspire and bring victory to the enemies viz. gods, Vṛṣaparvā propitiated his preceptor by falling prostrate at his feet on the way.

27. The glorious Śukra, the descendent of Bhṛgu whose anger lasts hardly for half a moment, spoke to his disciple Vṛṣaparvā, "Oh King ! Let the desire of her (Devayānī) be satisfied because I cannot brook to let her alone."

28. When Vṛṣaparvā agreed with the words, "Be it so", and awaited (to hear Devayānī's desire), Devayānī disclosed what was in her mind. "Wherever I shall go after being given away by my father in marriage, let her (Śarmiṣṭhā) follow me along with her companions (as attendants)."

29. Realizing the peril (involved in the departure of Śukra) to her people, and the importance of the matter, she (Śarmiṣṭhā) along with her thousand lady-companions, attended upon Devayānī like a menial.

1. According to *MBH. Ādi. chs. 76-77* Kaca, the son of Bṛhaspati could successfully learn the *Saṅjivani Vidyā* from Śukra through the special favour of Devayānī. At the time of departure Devayānī proposed to marry him. But he rejected her on the ground that being his preceptor's daughter she is like a sister to him. Enraged at this, Devayānī cursed him that his *vidyā* will be futile. Kaca reciprocated the curse (that no Brāhmaṇa would marry her).

30. Having given in marriage his daughter along with Śarmiṣṭhā to Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, Śukra warned him, "Oh king ! Never take Śarmiṣṭhā to share the bed with you."

31. On one occasion, seeing Devayānī blessed with a son, the chaste lady Śarmiṣṭhā, at the period proper for conception, courted her friend's (Devayānī's) husband secretly (for children).

32. The king, being well-versed in *Dharma-śāstra*, realized it to be his sacred duty to comply with the request of the princess (Śarmiṣṭhā) who solicited him for progeny, and he followed the course ordained for him by Destiny, though he remembered the warning of Śukra.

33. Devayānī gave birth to Yadu and Turvasu, while Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā, had three sons—Druhyu, Anu, and Pūru.

34. Learning about the pregnancy of the Asura princess from her husband, proud Devayānī, being offended with her husband (through jealousy and pride), was overwhelmed with rage and proceeded to her father's house.

35. The passionate king followed his beloved to reconcile her with words of appeasement and winsome promises, but was not able to please her, even by shampooing her feet.

36. Flying in rage, Śukra cursed him, "You liar ! Woman-addict ! Let the decrepitude of old age which disfigures men overtake you, you stupid fellow !"

37. Yayāti urged, "Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ! I am not till today sated with enjoyment of pleasure with your daughter". (Śukra replied) "In that case, you may exchange it (your old age) with the (youth of) anyone else who is willing to accept it."

38-39. Having secured this arrangement (as a way out of the curse), Yayāti addressed to his eldest son : "Oh my child Yadu ! Please accept this decrepitude of age caused by your maternal grand-father, and give me your youth in exchange. Dear child ! I am not yet satisfied with enjoyment of pleasures. I would like to enjoy for a few more years, with your youth."

Yadu replied :

40* “I dare not accept and live with the old age which overtook you in the middle of life, (for) a man cannot attain to desirelessness without an actual experience of the worldly pleasures first.”

41. Turvasu, Anu, and Druhyu were then requested (one by one) by the father. But they did not know what was righteousness and regarded transient things (like youth) as eternal, and refused his proposal, Oh scion of Bharata.

42. He requested his son Pūru who was the youngest in age but seniormost in virtues. “Oh child ! It does not behove you to refuse my request as was done by your elder brothers”.

Pūru said :

43. “Oh lord of men ! What man on earth is capable of repaying fully the obligations of his father, the procreator of his body, and through whose grace one can attain the highest (objective in life) ?

44. The best son is he who accomplishes the task in anticipation of the expectation of his father. The mediocre is one who complies when expressly told by his father. The lowest type is he who obeys but with irreverence. And he who disobeys is the excretion of his father.”

45. In this way, Pūru gladly accepted the old age of his father. With his youth, Yayāti also enjoyed pleasures at his sweet will.

46. As a lord of the seven continents of the earth, he protected his subjects well like a father, and with his senses unimpaired, he gratified his desires (by enjoying pleasures) to his heart's content.

47. His beloved Devayāni every day heightened his love by affording pleasures to him by her thought, word and deed, and by offering objects of enjoyment in privacy.

* Yadu was very pious (*infra* 10.1.2). VC defends Yadu's disobedience thus: Yadu wanted to devote himself to the services of the Lord at the earliest. That mental stage is possible only after actual experience of worldly pleasures for some days. Acceptance of Yayāti's age would postpone that mental stage and consequently the life devoted to the services of the Lord. Between Service to the Lord and disobedience to father, the former is preferable according to Dharma. Marvellous defence !

48. By performance of sacrifices with profusely liberal gifts, Yayāti worshipped Lord Hari (Destroyer of all miseries and sins) the Presiding Deity of sacrifices, the God who represents all gods in Himself, and is an embodiment of all Vedas.

49. On Hari is superimposed this universe as a row of clouds on the sky and which, like a dream or an illusion or a fancy now appears to be different (in names, forms etc.) and now ceases to be (in dreamless sleep or after the deluge of the world).

50. Enthroning in his heart the Almighty Lord Vāsudeva who is abiding in the hearts of all as the Indweller, he (Yayāti) worshipped the subtlest Nārāyaṇa without cherishing any desire for blessings.

51. Yayāti, the emperor of the entire earth, did not feel sated even though he enjoyed pleasures for thousands of years through his (five) wicked senses of which his mind was the sixth.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Yayāti's Retirement and Final Emancipation

Śrī Śuka said :

1. (While) Yayāti, the woman-dominated addict, was enjoying the pleasures of senses in this way, he became aware of his spiritual fall (negligence of the Self) and being disenchanted (with worldly pleasures), narrated the following parable to his beloved Devayānī.

2. "Oh Devayānī ! Please listen to this history of a passionate person on this earth, whose life and conduct were just like mine, and whose lot was deplored by self-controlled people residing in forests.

3. A certain goat, while seeking all alone for an object dear to him, in a jungle, happened to see a goat fallen into a well as a result of her fate.

4. Cherishing lust for her, the goat thought out a way to lift her up and digging out the earth on the bank with the tips of his horns, he made a way out for her.

5-6. It is said that after getting out of the well, the beautiful she-goat loved him (as her husband). Observing that she had selected a stout, finely bearded, lovable he-goat possessing great venereal strength and expert in the art of sexual intercourse, a number of other she-goats desirous of having a mate, wooed him. That he-goat possessed as he was by the devil of sexual passion, excited the passion of that flock of she-goats and revelled with them all alone, and thus failed to realize and think about his own self.

7. Seeing him enjoying himself with another most beautiful she-goat, the female-goat that formerly suffered a fall in the well, did not tolerate that act of the he-goat.

8. Being distressed, she left her mate who was wicked-hearted, a false lover posing as a friend, and professing love only for a moment, but really given to the gratification of his senses, and went to her master.

9. Even that goat too, being a woman-addict, felt aggrieved and followed her to reconcile her, but in spite of his bleating with erotic eloquence he failed to win her over on the way.

10. There, her master, a certain Brāhmaṇa, castrated the dangling scrotum of that goat. But in the interest (of the she-goat), he, being a master of (such) expedients sewed back the amputated limb.

11. Having got his testicles (along with his capacity of sexual enjoyment) restored, the goat, though enjoyed pleasures for a long time with the she-goat found in the well, does not feel satiated with sexual pleasures even today.

12. In the same way, Oh lady with beautiful eyebrows, I, a person of poor intellect, am chained down by your love, Oh gracious lady. Being infatuated by your charms, I do not know (the nature of) my Self.

13. All the food-grains, all gold, animals and women cannot yield satisfaction (to the degree of satiation) to the mind of a person subjected to cravings and passions.

14. Never, never does passion get satiated with the en-

joyment of its sense-objects. (On the contrary) like a fire fed with oblations of ghee, it grows again in intensity.

15. When one does not cherish inauspicious attitudes (e. g. of hatred, partiality) to living beings, and looks upon all with equality, all the directions are full of bliss to him (i.e. he is blessed with happiness from all quarters).

16. A person desirous of happiness (untarnished by misery), should instantly give up thirst (for happiness) which is difficult to get rid of by evil-minded persons, and which does not get worn out even if one's body gets withered with age, and which is a source of endless misery.

17. A person should not sit very close in privacy (lit. share the same seat in private) to his mother, sister or daughter. For the senses (as a whole) are so powerful that they lead astray even a wise (learned) man.

18. It is for complete one thousand years that I have been enjoying repeatedly and incessantly the objects of pleasures. Still every time (I enjoy them), the hankering after them grows (apace).

19. Therefore giving up this (thirst for enjoyment) and concentrating my mind on the *Brahman* and freeing myself from the pairs of opposites (pleasure-pain etc.) and the notion of egotism (I and mine), I shall lead a life in forest.

20. Knowing the unreality (momentariness) of what is seen (the kingdom or pleasures in this world) and what is heard (from the *Vedas* about the pleasures and positions promised in the next world), one should not brood over them or enjoy them. For, in that lies the transmigration of the soul, and the loss of (the real knowledge of) the soul. Such a knower realizes the *Ātman*".

21. Having addressed thus to his wife (*Devayānī*), *Yayāti*, the son of *Nahuṣa*, returned his youth to *Pūru*, and becoming free from desires, accepted the decrepitude of his old age from him.

22. He appointed *Druhyu* to rule over the South-eastern region (of his kingdom), *Yadu* in the South, *Turvasu* in the west and *Anu* in the north.

23. Having consecrated *Pūru*, the worthiest of them all, as the sovereign ruler of the earth and the subjects, he placed

the elder brothers under his control and then repaired to the forest.

24. Just as a bird leaves its nest as soon as it gets full-fledged, he instantly shed off the six-fold objects of pleasures enjoyed through his senses and mind, for a considerable number of years (or) controlled his senses and mind.

25*. Freeing himself completely from all attachments and shedding off his subtle body constituted of three *guṇas* by virtue of his spiritual power of self realization, the celebrated king Yayāti became absorbed¹ in the Supreme Brahman unsoiled by *Māyā* (or any impurity) and designated as Vāsudeva—a state attained by the devotees of the Supreme Lord.

26. Hearing that parable, Devayānī regarded it as an incentive to follow a path of renunciation, and a jocular story told out of agony of separation between a man and his wife.

27-28. Realizing that the association of friends and relatives is brought about by *Māyā* (according to their *karma*)¹ and is controlled by the Almighty Lord, and thus is as temporary as those of travellers attending a watering place (to drink water on the way), Devayānī, the scion of the Bhṛgu race, gave up attachment to everything and everywhere regarding it as unreal as dreams. She concentrated her mind on Kṛṣṇa (i. e. Lord Viṣṇu) and shuffled off her (subtle) body (and became liberated).

29. I bow to you the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the cause of the Universe, the abode of all beings (or the Inner Controller of all) perfectly serene and all-pervading. Salutations to you.

* VJ. By his direct perception of the Self, he shed off his egotism caused by three *guṇas* or the threefold misery caused by them and became liberated—a stage reached by following the *Bhāgavata dharma*.

1. VR. He approached the stage of Mokṣa, for according to the *Mahābhārata*, he spent some period in the celestial world.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The History of Pūru's race—Birth of Bharata¹

Śrī Śuka said :

1. I shall now narrate to you the history of Pūru's line wherein you are born, Oh descendant of Bharata. In this family sprang up many royal sages and Brāhmaṇas who propagated their own lines.

2. Janamejaya was born of Pūru; Janamejaya's son was Pracinvān. His son was Pravīra who begot Namasyu. To him was born Cārupada.

3. Sudyu sprang from Cārupada; Sudyu had a son Bahugava; thence was born Saṁyāti; his son was Ahaṁyāti whose son was Raudrāśva.

4-5. Raudrāśva begot on a celestial nymph Ghṛtāci ten sons viz. Ṛteyu, Kukṣeyu, Sthaṇḍileyu, Kṛteyu, Jaleyu, Santateyu, Dharmeyu, Satyeyu, Vrateyu and the youngest known as Vaneyu—even as ten sense organs (both conative and cognitive) are evolved from the chief vital air, the Soul of the world.

6. From Ṛteyu was born Rantibhāra. He had the following three sons viz. Sumati, Dhruva and Apratiratha. Kaṇva was the son of Apratiratha, Oh King !

7. Kaṇva's son was Medhātithi. From him were originated Praskaṇva and other Brāhmaṇa clans. Sumati had a son called Raibhya, and Duṣyanta was regarded as his son.

8-9. While on a hunting excursion, (king) Duṣyanta happened to visit the hermitage of Kaṇva. Having seen a beautiful damsel beautifying the surroundings with her effulgence, and enchanting like the Māyā of the Lord, he instantaneously got infatuated. And though surrounded by some of his soldiers, he spoke to that charming lady.

1. This chapter gives the following descendants of Pūru up to Vitatha as follows :

Pūru→Janamejaya→Pracinvān→Pravīra→Namasyu→Cārupada→Sudyu→Bahugava→Saṁyāti→Ahaṁyāti→Raudrāśva→Ṛteyu→Rantibhāra→Sumati→Raibhya→Duṣyanta→Bharata→Bharadvāja→Vitatha. The story of Duṣyanta, Śakuntalā and the birth of Bharata is given in details in *MBH Ādi. Chs. 69-74.*

10. Overjoyed at her very sight, he felt all his fatigue relieved. Tormented by sexual passion, he smilingly asked her, in soft words.

11. "Who are you, Oh beautiful lady (with eyes like lotus-petals) ? Whose daughter are you, Oh charming damsel ? what is your object in staying in a tenantless forest ?

12. Oh lady of a beautiful waist ! As I perceive it, you are obviously a girl from a royal family. For the mind of the descendants of Pūru, hardly finds delight in unrighteous paths."

Śakuntalā replied :

13. "As the venerable sage Kaṇva knows it, I am the daughter of Viśvāmitra, abandoned by my mother Menakā in the forest. What should we do for you, Oh warrior ?

14. Be pleased to take a seat, Oh lotus-eyed one, and accept our hospitality. Enjoy the boiled rice of wild paddy. You may stay here, if it pleases you."

Duśyanta said :

15. "Oh lady of beautiful eyebrows ! Born as you are in the line of Kuśika, all this (hospitality) is quite proper and natural. Maidens of royal families select of their own accord, their life-mates".

16. When she consented to it, he married Śakuntalā duly according to Gāndharva custom prescribed (for Kṣatriyas) in *Dharmaśāstra*, as the king was expert in the knowledge of what should be done at particular time and place according to Dharma.

17. The royal sage of unfailing procreative capacity, deposited his semen in his queen. Next morning he returned to his capital. In due course, she was delivered of a son.

18. Kaṇva carried out the appropriate religious rites of the boy, in the forest. With his tremendous strength, the child used to catch hold of lions and played with them.

19. Taking with her, her son who was born of a portion of Lord Hari, and was of invincible prowess, the excellent lady sought the audience of her royal consort.

20. When the king did not accept his wife and child, though both of them were blameless and irreproachable, an

incorporal voice from heaven announced, while all beings were listening.

21. "The mother is simply a receptacle. The son belongs to his father alone, of whom he is born. Nay, the father is himself (no other than) the son. Therefore, Oh Duṣyanta, bring up your son. Do not neglect Śakuntalā.

22. Oh King, a son who propagates the line of the family takes away his father out of the abode of Yama.¹ You have deposited Bharata in the foetus (i.e. you are the real father). What Śakuntalā stated is the truth.²

22A. Bring up your son Bharata who is imbued with a ray of Vāsudeva. He is friendly towards Brāhmins, true to his promise, capable of knowing and appreciating virtues and excellences and enhancing your reputation.

22B. He is possessed of superior energy, is generous, grateful and ready to wait upon the elders." Hearing this incorporal voice from the heaven, the king accepted his son.

23. When the father (Duṣyanta) expired, he (Bharata) became an emperor of great renown. The great glory of Bharata who was born from the ray of Lord Hari, is still eulogised on the earth.

24. He had the sign of discus on right palm and that of a lotus on the soles of his feet. That powerful king, the sole emperor of the earth was consecrated (on the throne) by the performance of *Mahābhiṣeka*. He performed many sacrifices.

25. With fifty-five sacrificial horses he performed (horse) sacrifices along the course of the Gaṅgā (from its source to the sea) with Dīrgha-tamas (the son of Mamatā) as his sacrificial priest.

26. Along the course of the Yamunā, he tied seventy-eight sacrificial horses (i. e. performed seventy-eight horse-sacrifices on the bank of the river as it flows to join the Gaṅgā), liberally distributing wealth (among the Brāhmaṇas).

1. v.l. : In case of dispute between the father and the mother both claiming the child, the father's claim is upheld by Yama (Dharmaśāstra).

2. Cf. *MBH Ādi.* 74. 110-111. is *verbatim* the same.

bhastrā mātā pituḥ putro yena jātaḥ sa eva saḥ /

— *bharasva putraṁ Duṣyanta māvamantsthāḥ Śakuntalām //*

— *retodhāḥ putra unnayati naradeva Tamakṣapāt /*

The sacred fire of Bharata, the son of Duṣyanta was set up on an exceedingly excellent place where the thousand Brāhmaṇas (engaged in the sacrifice) divided among themselves cows (gifted by Bharata), each receiving his share of thirteen thousand eightyfour (*Badva*¹) cows.

27. Having thus tied to the sacrificial post one hundred and thirtythree horses, he sprang a surprise on the earthly kings. The son of Duṣyanta surpassed gods with his affluence, and he became one with Viṣṇu who is adorable to gods.

28. At the conclusion of the sacrificial ritual *maṣṇāra*² (or at a sacred place called Maṣṇāra), he donated as gift, fourteen lakhs of elephants of the *mṛga* type³ black in colour, with their white tusk plated with gold.⁴

29. No king of the past could accomplish the great eminence of Bharata. Nor can kings of the future do so any more than one can reach the celestial world by hands.

30. During his expedition for the conquest of the world, he defeated the tribes Kirātas, Hūṇas, Yavanas, Āndhras, Kaṅkas, Khaśas and Śakas and killed the Mleccha kings who were inimical to Brahmins or Vedas.

31*. By sending messengers, he restored to the gods, the celestial damsels who were formerly abducted to Rasātala by Asuras, after vanquishing the gods and occupying various parts of that region.

32. While he ruled, both heaven and earth supplied desires and needs of his subjects. His sovereignty extended all over the world for thrice nine thousand (27000) years.

1. ŚR quotes the definition of *badva* : *iyam ca badva-saṅkhyā ślokena saṅgṛhyaṭe* :

*catur-daśānām lakṣānām saptaḍhika-śatānśakaḥ /
badvaṁ caturaśītyagra-sahasrāṇi trayodaśa //*

2. No commentator from ŚR to BP is sure of the exact significance of the word *maṣṇāra*. VJ : 'At the conclusion of a particular observance (*vrata*) called *Maṣṇāra*.' All of them state that (alternatively) Maṣṇāra is the name of a holy place.

3. The elephants are of the three types : *bhadra*, *mandra* and *mṛga*.

4. Cf. *Ait. Br.* 8.23.3. VD. regards these elephant-types as belonging to the region of the Himalayas, Vindhya and Sahyādri respectively.

* Vanquishing the Asuras, he repatriated gods to their respective regions and restored to their husbands the celestial damsels who were carried away by demons called Panis—VJ.

33. The tradition goes that the emperor realized that his sovereignty the fame of which had spread over all the worlds, his imperial glory and affluence, his unchallenged authority and implicit obedience to commands, nay even his life and sense-organs were unreal and so he renounced the world.

34. He had three queens all from the state of Vidarbha. When he remarked that his sons did not look like him, they, being afraid of being abandoned by him (suspecting their character), killed them all.

35. When his family line was (in the danger of being) extinct, the Marut gods gave him Bharadvāja as a son, when the emperor was propitiating them with sacrifice *Marutstoma* (for getting a son).

36. When Mamatā, the wife of his brother (Utathya), was pregnant, Bṛhaspati attempted to have a sexual intercourse with her, and was prevented (by the child in the womb with strong loud protests). He (Bṛhaspati) cursed the child in the womb (to become blind). He discharged per force his semen (in her), but the blind child in the womb prevented its entry by his foot. The seed that fell out on the ground assumed the form of a child.

37. To Mamatā who wanted to give away that child as she was terribly afraid of being abandoned by her husband, gods spoke the following verse which contains the etymology of the name of the child (which is nothing but the quarrel between Bṛhaspati and Mamatā each throwing the responsibility of bringing up that child on the other).

38. (SR. records this controversy between Mamatā and Bṛhaspati as follows) :

(Said Bṛhaspati :) “Oh foolish woman ! Nourish (this child). (If you say that you are afraid of your husband that is baseless as) this child is born of us two brothers (by me through the *Kṣetra* viz. the wife of my brother)!” (Replied Mamatā) “Bṛhaspati ! You nourish this child because he is born of us two (when you raped me)”. Saying these words (*bhara dvājam*) both the parents went away (abandoning the child). Hence he is called *Bhara-dvāja*.

39. Though urged by gods (to bring up the child), they thought him as a useless son and abandoned him. The Maruts nourished the child and it was given to Bharata when his family was going to be extinct. (*Vitatha* should be regarded as the name of Bharadvāja, after his adoption by Bharata).

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Race of Bharata¹. The History of Rantideva²

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Vitatha (Bharadvāja) had a son Maṇyu who begot (five sons) viz. Bṛhatkṣatra, Jaya, Mahāvīrya, Nara, Garga. Nara's son was Saṅkṛti.

2. Saṅkṛti had two sons—Guru and Rantideva, Oh delight of the Pāṇḍu family ! The glory of Rantideva is eulogised in this world as well as in heaven.

3-4. By giving away wealth which came his way without efforts (like the sky) thinking it to be momentary, he became hungry and destitute of everything (including provision even for the evening). While the hero suffered hardships along with his family, fortyeight days passed during which he could not get even water to drink. In the morning (of the fortyninth day), he happened to get by chance ghee, rice cooked in milk, (*samydāva*) (an article of food consisting of wheat-flour, raw-sugar, ghee and milk) along with water.

5. He whose family was distressed and trembling due to utter starvation and parched with thirst, was about to partake of it (the food) when a Brāhmaṇa guest arrived, just at the time of their breaking the fast.

1. As ŚR points out, although Bharadvāja was originally a Brāhmaṇa, he became Kṣātriya after his adoption by Bharata. He is thenceforth known as Vitatha and he continued Bharata's race.

2. The Rantideva episode and especially his refusal to attain to Mokṣa but wish to live here in order to relieve the misery of all beings (vv 12, 13 below) are similar to the Bodhisattva ideal of Buddhists.

6. As he visualized Hari everywhere (and in everybody), he received the Brāhmaṇa with reverence and faith, gave him his share of food. The Brāhmaṇa took his meal and went his way.

7. While he was about to partake of the remaining food which was distributed among themselves, another stranger—now a Śūdra—arrived. He gave him the portion of the food so distributed, contemplating all the while on Lord Hari, Oh king of the earth.

8. When the Śūdra departed, another stranger surrounded by a pack of hounds approached him and requested, “Oh King ! May food be served to me alongwith my dogs, who are hungry”.

9. The king received them kindly and gave to him respectfully whatever food that remained with him, and bowed to the dogs and the master of those hounds.

10-11. Now some water, just sufficient to quench the thirst of one person, remained. While he was about to drink it, a Cāṇḍāla came up and requested, “Give water to me who am a low caste person”. Hearing his pitiful request uttered with great pains and exhaustion, the king who was deeply moved and tormented with compassion, uttered the following nectar-like speech.

12. “I do not seek from the Almighty Lord the highest position attended with eight spiritual powers (e. g. *Aṇimā*, *Laghimā*, etc. detailed in the *Yogasūtras*), nor emancipation from *samsāra*; I would rather prefer to dwell in all beings and undergo sufferings for them, whereby they may be free from miseries.

13. By offering water which was essential to save the life of an unfortunate creature who craved for life, my personal hunger, thirst, exhaustion of limbs, distress, languor, grief, despondency and delusion—all have disappeared.”

14. Expressing such nobility of heart, the king who was compassionate by nature and full of fortitude, gave that water to the Cāṇḍāla, though he himself was on the point of death through thirst.

15. To him, the Lords of the Three worlds (e. g. God Brahmā and others) who bestow fruits on those who seek them,

and who visited him in those illusory forms (a short while ago) under instructions from Lord Viṣṇu, revealed themselves to him.

16. The king being entirely free from attachments, cherished no desires. Bowing down to them all, he concentrated his mind on glorious Lord Vāsudeva with utmost devotion, and sought no boons from them.

17. Concentrating his mind on the Almighty Lord as the only support, and cherishing no desire for any fruit (in return) therefrom, *Māyā* the deluding potency of the Lord constituted of three *guṇas* (automatically) dissolved (disappeared altogether) like a dream, in the case of Rantideva, Oh king.

18. By virtue of close association with him, all *yogins* who followed closely Rantideva (i. e. his path of intense, selfless devotion) became absolutely devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa.

19-20. From Garga was born Śini who begot Gārgya. In this way, a Brāhmaṇa family-line started from a Ksatriya race. From Mahāvīrya sprang Duritakṣaya whose sons were Trayyāruṇi, Kavi and Puṣkarāruṇi. They attained to the state of Brāhmaṇahood. Bṛhat-ksattra had a son, who built the city of Hastināpura.

21. Hastin begot Ajamīḍha, Dvimīḍha and Purumīḍha. The descendants of Ajamīḍha were Brāhmaṇas like Priyamedha and others.

22. From Ajamīḍha was born (another son) Bṛhadiṣu whose son was Bṛhad-dhanu. His son was Bṛhatkāya whose son was Jayadratha.

23. He (Jayadratha) begot Viśada from whom sprang up Senajit. His sons were Rucirāśva, Dṛḍhahanu, Kāśya and Vatsa.

24. Rucirāśva's son was Pāra whose son was Pṛthuṣeṇa. Pāra's son was Nīpa to whom were born a hundred sons.

24A. Among them one was Aṇuha, the eldest was Satyaka, Oh King.

25. That Nīpa begot on Kṛtvī, the daughter of Śuka¹,

1. ŚR. VR. VQ. BP. quote from HV (*Harivamśa*) ch. 18 and explain that when Śuka left home even before his *upanayana* (investiture of the sacred thread) ceremony, to lead a perpetually celibate life, he left

Brahmadatta. That *yogī* procreated through his wife Gau (Sarasvatī) a son called Viśvakṣena.

26. According to the advice and guidance of sage Jaigīṣavya, he wrote a work on the *yoga*-system. He begot Udakṣvan from whom sprang Bhallāda. These are the descendants of Bṛhadiṣu.

27. Dvimiḍha had a son called Yavīnara whose son was Kṛtimān by name. His son was Satyadhṛti whose son Dṛḍhanemi was the progenitor of Supārśva.

28-29. From Supārśva was born Sumati whose son was Sannati. His son was Kṛti who learnt yoga under Hiraṇyānābha, and sang the six earlier *saṁhitās* of the *Sāma-veda*¹ (divided them separately). He begot Nīpa from whom was born Ugrāyudha. His son was Kṣemya; his son Suvīra from whom was born Ripuñjaya.

30. His son was Bahurātha. Purumiḍha (Dvimiḍha's younger brother) had no child. Ajamiḍha begot on Nalinī, a son called Nīla whose son was Śānti.

31. From Śānti was born Suśānti, whose son was Puruḥa, from whom Arka was born. His son was Bharmyāśva who had five sons beginning with Mudgala.

32-33. Yavīnara, Bṛhadiṣu, Kāmpilya and Sañjaya were the (remaining four) sons (of Bharmyāśva). Bharmyāśva said, "These five sons of mine are capable (and enough) to

behind his shadow for the consolation of his father who married and had five sons and one daughter. The daughter is named *Kīrti-matī* and not Kṛtvī as here. *Devī Bhāgavata* I.19.39-43 rejects the shadow theory and states that as per Janaka's advice Śuka married pīvarī, a daughter of Pitr̥s and had four sons (names differ from the HV), and a daughter Kīrti who was married to Anu, the son of king Vibhrāj. I think JG is correct in regarding this Śuka as a different person, not so much because JG quotes the authority of the *Brahmavaivarta P.* where Śuka is said to have been born as a boy of twelve years, who, renouncing the world, straightway walked out of home, but the tenor of the text of the Bh.P., shows that according to Śuka the narrator of the Bh. P. this Śuka, father of Kṛtvī, is altogether different, merely a name-sake.

1. v.l. *jagan dvi-jat*—Twelve earlier *saṁhitās* of the *Sāma Veda* (BP) and BP quotes VP. which credits him with saying (mastering and teaching) twenty-four *saṁhitās* :

Hiraṇyā-nābho yogam adhyāpayāmāsa /
yaścaturviṁśatim prācya-sāmnāṁ cakāra saṁhitāṁ //

protect five countries. And hence they came to be known as Pāñcālas. From Mudgala originated a clan of Brāhmaṇas named Maudgalya.

34. A twin was born of Mudgala, the son of Bharmyāśva; (out of the twin) the male child was Divodāsa and the female child, Ahalyā. She had from (her husband) Gautama, a son called Śatānanda.

35-36. Śatānanda's son Satyadhṛti was expert in Military Science. His son was Śaradvān. They say that at the sight of Urvaśī, the seed of Śaradvān (emanated and) fell on a clump of reeds. From the semen was produced an auspicious twin. Finding the twin children during the course of hunting, Śantanu picked them out of compassion. The male child came to be known as Kṛpa, while the female child Kṛpī became the wife of Droṇa.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The History of the Lunar Race.¹ The Royal Dynasties of Pāñcāla, Magadha and Kuru

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. From Divodāsa was born Mitreyu, whose sons were Cyavana, Sudāsa, Sahadeva and Somaka. Somaka had a hundred sons of whom Jantu was the eldest, and Pṛṣata, the youngest. His son was Drupada whose daughter was Draupadī, and sons were Dhṛṣṭadyumna and others.

1. This chapter gives the genealogies of the following branches of the lunar race :

i. Pāñcālas A. South Pāñcālas

Ajamīdha → Bṛhadiṣu → Bṛhad-dhanus → Bṛhatkāya → Jayadratha
Viśada ← Senajit → Rucirāśva → Pṛthuṣena → Para → Nīpa → Brahmadaṭṭa →
Viṣvaksena → Udaksvana → Bhallāda.

B. North Pāñcālas

Ajamīdha → Nalini → Nīla → Śānti → Suśānti → Puruja → Arka →
Bharmyāśva → Mudgala → Divodāsa → Mitreyu → Cyavana → Sudāsa →
Sahadeva → Somaka → Jantu → Pṛṣata → Drupada

3. From Dhṛṣṭadyumna appeared Dhṛṣṭaketu. These are the descendants of Bharmyāśva, also known as Pāñcālakas or Pāñcāla. Ajamiḍha had another son Ṛkṣa from whom was born Saṁvaraṇa.

4. Saṁvaraṇa begot on Tapatī, the daughter of the Sun-god, Kuru, the Lord of the Kurukṣetra. Kuru had Parīkṣit (the first, an ancestor of the hearer of the Bh. P.) Sudhanu, Jahnu and Niṣadhāśva as his sons.

5. From Sudhanu was born Suhotra whose son was Cyavana, his son was Kṛti, the father of Uparicara Vasu. From him were born Bṛhadratha and other sons.

6. (Out of them) Kuśāmba, Matsya, Pratyagra, Cedipa and others were the rulers of the Cedi country (Modern Bundelkhand and the region roundabout). From Bṛhadratha was born Kuśāgra whose son was Ṛṣabha.

7. Ṛṣabha begot Satyahita, whose son was Puṣpavān. His son was Jahu. Bṛhadratha had two parts (of a child) born by another wife.

8. Those parts were thrown away by the mother. A demoness Jarā, out of sport had joined them muttering the words 'Live ! Live. And lo ! A son called Jarāsandha (one joined by Jarā) appeared.

9. Of him was born Sahadeva whose son was Somāpi, who begot Śrutaśravas. (Out of the sons of Kuru) Parīkṣit was childless. The son of Jahnu was Suratha.

2. Magadha

Vasu Uparicara→Bṛhadratha→Kuśāgra→Ṛṣabha→Puṣpavān→
Satyahita→Jahu→Jarāsandha→Sahadeva→Somāpi

3. Pauravas

Bharata adopted Bharadvāja and named him 'Vitatha'→Manyu→
Bṛhatkṣatra→Hastin→Ajamiḍha→Ṛkṣa→Saṁvaraṇa→Kuru→

Dvimiḍha

Parīkṣit I→

Jahnu→Suratha→Vidūratha→Sārvabhauma→Jayasena→Rādhika→
Ayuta→Krodhana→Devātithi→Ṛṣya→Dilīpa→Pratīpa→Śantanu→
Vicitravīrya→Dhṛtarāṣṭra→Yudhiṣṭhira→(Abhimanyu)→Parīkṣit II
(the remaining line is a prediction).

4. *Dvimiḍhas*

Dvimiḍha→Yavinara→Kṛtimān→Satyadhṛti→Dṛḍha-nemi→
Supārśva→Sumati→Sannatimān→Kṛti→Nīpa→Ugrāyudha→Kṣemya→
Suvīra→Ripuñjaya→Bahuratha.

10. Suratha's son was Vidūratha, from whom was born Sārvabhauma. His son was Jayasena, whose son was Rādhika; from whom appeared Ayuta.

11. From him sprang up Krodhana whose son was Devātithi. His son was Ṛṣya, from whom was born Dilīpa. He had a son Pratīpa.

12. He (Pratīpa) had three sons—Devāpi, Śantanu and Bālīka. Devāpi abdicated his ancestral throne and repaired to forest (for his spiritual advancement).

13-14. (After Devāpi's departure to forest) Śantanu who was formerly designated as Mahābhiṣa (a great physician), came to the throne. Whomsoever he touched with his hand—even if he be old—got rejuvenated again. And the old man got immediate and complete relief (from all ailments). By virtue of this (miraculous) gift, he was called Śantanu. When the rain-god did not rain for twelve years in his kingdom,

15. Śantanu was advised by Brāhmaṇas that inasmuch as he, though a younger brother, enjoyed the kingship (superseding his elder brother) and had become a *parivettā*¹ (a usurper), and for the prosperity of the capital and the kingdom, he should immediately restore the kingdom to his elder brother, Devāpi (when alone it will rain).

16. When thus addressed (advised) by Brāhmaṇas, he conciliated him (Devāpi) and persuaded him to accept the kingdom. Devāpi, however, was made to go astray from the path of Vedas by the words of Brāhmaṇas who were deputed by his ministers (especially by his minister (Aśma-rāva)).

17. When Devāpi spoke blasphemously about the Vedas (and their teachings), the god Indra released the showers (as Devāpi proved apostate to the Vedic religion, and ceased to have a right to rule). Devāpi (realized his mistake and adopted the path of *yoga* and resorted to Kalāpagrāma.

1. ŚR quotes the following definition of *Parivettā* from a *Smṛti* text :

*dārd'gnihotra-sanyogam kurute yo' grahe sthite /
parivettā sa vijānāt, parivittis tu pūruṣaḥ //*

He who accepts a wife or *Agni-hotra* (fire-worship) before his elder brother does so, is called *parivettā* and the brother so superseded *Parivitti*.

18-20. When Lunar race gets extinct in the Kali age, he will (re-) establish it at the advent of the next age. From Bāhlika was born Somadatta who had three sons viz. Bhūri, Bhūriśravas and Śāla. Śantanu's son by Gaṅgā was the self-controlled Bhīṣma who was the most eminent among all the experts in *dharma-śāstra*, a great devotee of the Lord, a wise and learned person, a leader of a battalion of warriors by whom even Parśurāma (his preceptor in the science of arms) was pleased with his art and skill in fighting. Śantanu begot on Satyavatī¹, the daughter of the chief of Dāśas, a son called Citrāṅgada.

21. Her younger son was Vicitra-vīrya. Citrāṅgada was killed (in a duel with a Gandharva, called Citrāṅgada). Through her, from Parāśara, descended directly a digit or a ray of Lord Hari as her son (in the person of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana).

22-24. The sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana is the protector of the Vedas from whom I learnt this *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. In super-session of his own disciples such as Paila and others (vide Supra 1. 4. 21-22), the venerable sage Bādarāyaṇa preferred me, his son, as I was very serene by nature and recited (taught) to me this esoteric and sacred text (viz. the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Then Vicitravīrya married two princesses of Kāśī, Ambā and Ambālikā both of whom were taken away by force (by Bhīṣma) from their *svayamvara*. Vicitravīrya was too much attached to them, and caught pthysis and died (in his youth).

25. When requested by his mother² (Satyavatī), Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa) procreated from the fields (i. e. wives) of his childless brother (Vicitravīrya)—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu and Vidura³

1. According to *MBH Adī* 63.50-69 she was the daughter of king Uparicara Vasu (vide V.5 above) developed in the womb of a celestial nymph Ārdrikā, cursed to be a female fish. She was brought up by the chief of fishermen and known as 'Satyavatī' due to her uprightness and moral virtues.

2. ŚR. quotes a religious injunction that one has to comply with such requests when instructed by elders.

3. Vidura's mother was not Vicitravīrya's wife, but a maid servant of the widowed queen Ambikā who deputed her as her substitute to Vyāsa — *MBH-Adī* 1.94-96.

26. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had a hundred sons by his wife Gāndhārī. Of them, Duryodhana was the eldest. They had also a daughter, by name Duḥśalā.

27. To Pāṇḍu who was prohibited from sexual intercourse by a curse, three great (chariot-) warriors, the eldest of whom was Yudhiṣṭhira (Bhīma and Arjuna being the next two) were procreated on Kuntī from Dharma (the god Yama-dharma), the wind-god and Indra.

28. Nakula and Sahadeva were born from (the loins of Aśvinī-kumāras) through Mādrī (Pāṇḍu's second wife). Draupadī had five sons, one from each of her five husbands—all of them your uncles (or who were the manes in their former life).

29-31. (Through Draupadī) Prativindhya was born from Yudhiṣṭhira; Śrutasena, from Bhīma; Śrutakīrti from Arjuna, Śatānīka from Nakula. Śrutakarmā was the son of Sahadeva. The other sons of the Pāṇḍavas were as follows : Yudhiṣṭhira begot Devaka on Pauravī; Bhīma had Ghaṭotkaca by Hidimbā and Sarvagata by Kālī. Vijayā, the daughter of Parvata, gave birth to a son Suhotra from Sahadeva.

32. Nakula begot Nirāmitra on Kareṇumatī. So also Arjuna had Irāvān from Ulūpī and Babhruvāhana by (Citrāṅgadā) the princess of the Maṇipura king. But he was adopted as a son by his (maternal) grandfather (as that was the condition precedent of the marriage, technically called *putrikāsuta*)¹

33. Your father Abhimanyu was born of Subhadrā. He was a hero who vanquished all *ati-rathis* (a chariot-warrior who defeats innumerable enemies on the battlefield). You are born of Uttarā from him.

34. When all the Kauravas were slain, (Aśvatthāman) the son of Droṇa discharged the missile called *Brahmāstra*.

1. VR., GD., BP.VD. quote the condition:

abhrātṛkām pradāsyāmi tūbhyam kanyām alankṛtām /

asyām yo jāyate putraḥ sa me putro bhaviṣyati //

'I give in marriage my daughter duly decorated with ornaments, on condition that, as she has no brother, the son that will be born to her will be my son.'

You were rescued alive from the god of death by the spiritual prowess of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

35. Oh child ! You have the following four sons, the eldest of whom is Janamejaya, the rest being Śrutasena, Bhīmasena and Ugrasena—all of whom are valiant.

36. Knowing that you have met death from Takṣaka's bite, he (Janamejaya) will get enraged, and will commit as oblations to fire, serpents in the serpent-sacrifice.

37. Having conquered the earth on all sides, and appointing Tura, the son of Kavaṣa, as the sacrificial priest, Janamejaya, the performer of *aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice), will worship the Lord by performance of many sacrifices.

38. Janamejaya's son Śatānīka will learn the three Vedas as well as the knowledge of religious rites from Yājñavalkya, the technique of the use of missiles (from Kṛpa), and the knowledge about the self (the spiritual science) from Śaunaka.

39. His son will be Sahasrānīka whose son will be Aśvamedhaja; his son will be Asīma-Kṛṣṇa, whose son will be Nemi-cakra.

40. When Hastināpura will be washed away by the floods of the river (Gaṅgā), he will settle down at Kauśāmbī (Kosam, near Allahabad). He will have Citraratha as his son, of whom a son Kaviratha will be born.

41. From Kaviratha will appear Vṛṣṭimān (as the son) from whom will be born king Mahīpati. Sunītha will be his son. He will have a son Nṛcakṣus whose son will be Sukhīnala.

42. His son will be Parīplava, whose son will be Medhāvī who will have Sunaya as his son. Thence will be born Nṛpañjaya, from whom will be Dūrva, who will beget Timi.

43. From Timi will be born Bṛhadratha whose son will be Sudāsa, the father of Śatānīka. From Śatānīka will spring Durdamana whose son will be Bahīnara.

44. His son will be Daṇḍapāṇi who will beget Nimi. From him will be born king Kṣemaka. In this way the lineage of Brāhmaṇa-cum-Kṣatriya (Lunar race from which Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya races started) which has been honoured and praised by gods and sages has been described to you.

45. When the lunar race reaches king Kṣemaka, it will

be extinct in the Kali age. Now I shall describe to you the future kings of the Magadha country.

46. The son of Sahadeva (Jarāsandha's successor—son) will be Mārjāri whose son will be Śrutaśravas. Thence will be Ayutāyu, whose son will be Niramitra.

47. His son will be Sunakṣatra, from whom will be born Bṛhatsena—his son will be Karmajit. Thence will be Śṛtañjaya, from whom will appear Vipra, the father of Śuci.

48. Then will follow Kṣema whose son will be Suvrata. His son will be born Dharmasūtra whose son will be Śama. Thence will be Dyumatsena from whom will be born Sumati, whose son will be Subala.

49. Thence will be Sunītha of whom Satyajit, the father of Viśvajit will be born. From Viśvajit will be born Ripuñjaya. The kings of Bṛhadratha dynasty will reign for one thousand years.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

*The History of the Dynasties of Anu, Druhyu,
Turvasu and Yadu¹*

Śrī Suka continued :

1. Anu (the son of Yayāti) had three sons—Sabhānara, Cakṣu and Parokṣa. From Sabhānara was born Kālanara, whose son was then Śṛñjaya.

1. For the clear understanding of the Purāṇic history the genealogies of different branches of the Lunar race are given below : These names indicate Successors to the thrones—not necessarily sons.

Anu-s —I Branch

Anu→Sabhānara→Kālanara→Śṛñjaya→Janamejaya→Mahāśīla→
Mahāmanas→Uśīnara→Śibi→Kaikeya

— II Branch

Titikṣu→Ruṣadratha→Hema→Sutapas→Sutapā-Bali→Aṅga→Khan-
apāna→Diviratha→Dharmaratha→Romapāda→Caturāṅga→Pṛthulākṣa
Campa→Bṛhatkarma→Bṛhadratha→Bṛhadbhānu→Bṛhanmanas→

2. His son was Janamejaya, who begot Mahāśīla and his son was Mahāmanas. Uśīnara and Titikṣu were the sons of Mahāmanas.

3-4. Uśīnara had four sons—Śibi, Vana, Śami and Dakṣa. Śibi's four sons were Vṛṣādarbha, Suvīra, Madra and Kaikeya. Titikṣu's son was Ruśādratha, and his son, Hema. Hema's son was Sutapas from whom Bali was born.

5. On the wife of king Bali (who was childless), the sage Dīrghatamas begot six sons beginning with Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and also those called by the names Suhma, Puṇḍra and Āndhra.

6. These six established principalities in eastern provinces were known after their names (respectively). From Aṅga was born Khanapāna whose son was Diviratha.

7. His son was Dharmaratha whose son Citraratha had no issue. He was also known as Romapāda and was a friend of Daśaratha (king of Ayodhyā).

8-10. Daśaratha gave his daughter Śāntā (in adoption) whom R̥ṣyaśṛṅga married. When Indra did not release showers of rain, beautiful courtesans enticed away that son of a female deer, by means of dancing, vocal and instrumental music, coquettish behaviour, embraces and presents and brought him (to the king). By conducting a sacrifice (Iṣṭi) in honour of Indra, he (propitiated Indra and) secured progeny

Jayadratha → Vijaya → Dhṛti → Dhṛtavrata → Satkarman → Adhiratha → Karṇa → Vṛṣasena

Druhyu-s

Druhyu → Babhru → Setu → Ārabdha → Gāndhāra → Dharma → Dhṛta → Durmanas → Pracetas → Prācetas

Turvasu-s

Turvasu → Vahni → Bharga → Bhānumān → Tribhānu → Karandhama → Maruta → Duṣyanta.

Yadus:

Haihaya Branch

Yadu → Sahasrajit → Śatajit → Haihaya → Dharmanetra → Kuntī → Sohañji → Mahiṣman → Bhadrāsena-ka → Durmada → Dhanaka → Kṛtavīrya → Arjuna → Jayadbaja → Tālajaṅgha → Vītibotra

Yadu : Main Branch

Yadu → Kroṣṭā → Vṛjinvan → Svāhi → Ruśeku → Citraratha → Śatābindu → Pṛthuśravas → Dharma → Uśīnas → Rucaka → Jyāmagha → Vidarbha...

to Romapāda (who was childless). Daśaratha who was issueless was also blessed with children by a similar sacrifice. Caturāṅga was born from Romapāda, whose son was Pṛthulākṣa.

11. Pṛthulākṣa had (three) sons viz. Bṛhadratha, Bṛhatkarmā and Bṛhadbhānu. From the first (Bṛhadratha), was born Bṛhan-manas, from whom Jayadratha appeared.

12. He begot on Sambhūti (a son called) Vijaya from whom appeared Dhṛti. Thence Dhṛtavrata whose son was Satkarmā, from whom was born Adhiratha.

13. While playing on the bank of the Gaṅgā the king found a son encased in a (floating) box, abandoned by Kuntī, as he was born before her marriage. Being issueless, he brought him up as his son.

14. Vṛṣasena was the son of Karṇa who became a king. Druhyu (another son of Yayāti) had a son called Babhru, whose son was Setu.

15. His son was Ārabdha; his son, Gāndhāra, whose son was Dharma. Dharma's son was Dhṛta of whom Durmanas was the son. His son was Pracetas who had a hundred sons.

16. They became the rulers of the Mlecchas, and established themselves in the northern region. Turvasu (another son of Yayāti) had a son called Vahni of whom Bhaga was born. His son was Bhānumān.

17. His (Bhānumān's) son was Tribhānu whose son was the noble-hearted Karandhama. His son was Marut. He was childless and adopted Duṣyanta of the Pūru line, as his son.

18-19. That Duṣyanta, being desirous of (one more) kingdom, returned again to his family (as Pūru's descendant). I shall now describe to you the dynasty of Yadu, the eldest son of Yayāti—a dynasty of great religious merits and capable of removing sins. A man who listens to the account of the (family-line of) Yadu is absolved of all sins.

20-21. It was in this dynasty that the Supreme Soul incarnated, assuming a human form. It is reported that Yadu had four sons—Sahasrajit, Kroṣṭṛ, Nala and Ripu. The son of the first (Sahasrajit) was Śatajit. He had (three) sons—Mahāhaya, Vepuhaya and Haihaya.

22. Haihaya's son was Dharma, whose son was Netra,

the father of Kunti. From Kunti was born Sohañji whose son was Mahiṣmān; his son was Bhadrāsena.

23. Bhadrāsena's sons were Durmada and Dhanaka, the father of Kṛtavīrya. Kṛtāgni, Kṛtavarmā and Kṛtaujaḥ also were the sons of Dhanaka.

24. Arjuna, the son of Kṛtavīrya became the lord of seven continents. He became extremely proficient in Yoga through the grace of Dattātreyā, himself a ray of Lord Hari.

25. Other rulers of the earth cannot definitely reach the status of Kārtavīrya, in point of performance of sacrifices, munificent donations, asceticism, spiritual (*yogic*) powers, scholarship, valour, victories etc.

26. For eighty five thousand years, with unabated strength . . .

26A. Arjuna ruled his kingdom always remembering Lord Hari. . . with no diminution in wealth of memory¹, he enjoyed the inexhaustible (fund) of objects of six senses (including the mind, as the sixth).

27. Out of his thousand sons, only five survived the battle (with Paraśurāma). They were Jayadhavja, Śūrasena, Vṛṣabha, Madhu and Ūrjita.

28. From Jayadhavja was born Tālajaṅgha, who had hundred sons. The family of Tālajaṅghas was destroyed by the prowess of Sagara (the Aurva).

29. Vītihoṭra was the eldest of Tālajaṅgha's sons. Of Madhu (the son of Kārtavīrya Arjuna) was born Vṛṣṇi². Madhu had hundred sons of whom Vṛṣṇi was the eldest. Hence the family came to be known after Vṛṣṇi.

30. Hence they came to be designated as Mādhavas, Vṛṣṇis and Yādavas, Oh king. Of Kroṣṭṛ, the son of Yadu, appeared Vṛjinavān.

31. He had a son Svāhi whose son was Ruśeku.³ His son was Citraratha from whom was born a great *yogin* Śaśabindu

1. v.l. *anaṣṭa-Viṣṇu-smaraṇaḥ* — who never forgot to remember Hari any time.

2. VR. notes a v.l. according to which 'Vītihoṭra's son was Madhu from whom Vṛṣṇi was born'. The text here creates some confusion, in this half line.

3. 𑀓𑀭𑀸𑀓𑀭𑀮𑀸, according to V.R. He notes 'Ruśeku' as a v.l.

of great affluence and luxurious life, as well as endowed with great moral virtues.

32. He was the master (possessor) of fourteen great jewels¹ and the sole sovereign ruler of the entire globe of the earth and of very great renown. He had ten thousand wives.²

33-34. By them he procreated a million sons. Of these, six were very prominent. Out of them, the son of Pṛthuśravas was known as Dharma. His son was Uśanas, a performer of one hundred horse-sacrifices (*aśvamedhas*). His son was Rucaka who had five sons. Listen (to their account).

35-36. They were called Purujit, Rukma, Rukmeṣu, Pṛthu and Jyāmagha. Jyāmagha who married Śaibyā, was childless, but he dared not take another wife through the fear (of Śaibyā). Once he brought from the enemy's house a girl for enjoyment. Seeing her in (her husband's) chariot, Śaibyā got enraged with her husband.

37. 'Who is this girl made to occupy my place in the chariot, you deceitful rogue'? (demanded Śaibyā). When he replied, "Your daughter-in-law", she smiled and spoke.

38. "I am a barren woman. How can a co-wife be my daughter-in-law?" "Oh queen! She will be suitable for marriage to the son who is to be born of you".

39. (ŚR gives a dramatic description of the situation). 'The king was perspiring and quaking through the fear of his wife. But he had all the while propitiated the fraternity of gods—*Viśvedevas*—and his manes, who approvingly blessed him) 'Amen', said the *Viśvedevas* and manes. After some time Śaibyā became pregnant (even after her menopause), and was

1. SR. quotes from *Mārkaṇḍeya purāṇa* the following list of jewels (i.e., excellent things) : An elephant, a horse, a chariot, women, an arrow, treasury, a garland of flowers, dress, wish-yielding tree, a Śakti (javelin), a noose, a gem (i.e. Ruby diamond), an umbrella and an aerial car.

2. VD. accepts this v.l. of ŚR :

tasya patnī-sahasrasya daśāsan sumahāyaśāḥ /

I accepted it as it is more clear than *patnīsahasrāṇāṁ daśānām /*

delivered of an auspicious son called 'Vidarbha', and he married the chaste girl who was already accepted as a daughter-in-law.¹

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The History of the Race of Yadu²

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Vidarbha begot on her (Bhojyā) two sons by name Kuśa and Kratha, and the third one Romapāda who was the delight of the Vidarbha family.

1. All commentators quote Parāśara who declared Jyāmagha as the most hen-pecked husband. But even Parāśara in VP.4.12.12 remarks 'About Jyāmagha (his henpeckedness) the following verse is recited', so the verse :

bhāryāvaśyās tu ye kecid bhaviṣyantyathavā mṛtāḥ !

teṣāṃ tu Jyāmaghaḥ śreṣṭhaś Śaibyāpatir abhūn nṛpaḥ ||

—VP.4.12.13 seems to be a traditional quotation.

2. The genealogies of the royal houses described in this chapter are given in order to clarify their mutual relations : They are the successors to the throne, not necessarily the sons of the predecessor

(1) *CEDI* (Vaidarbhas or Kaiśikas)

Vidarbha→Kuśa→Romapāda→Babhru→Kṛti→Uśika→Cedi → Caidya etc.

(2) *CEDI-PA-S* (Vāsavas or Cedipas)

Vasu-Uparicara→Cedipa or Pratyagra→Damaghoṣa→Śiśupāla→Dhṛṣṭa-ketu.

(3) *YĀDAVAS*

Vidarbha→Kratha→Kunti→Dhṛṣṭi→Nivṛti→Daśārha→Vyoman→Jīmūta → Vikṛti → Bhīmaratha → Navaratha → Daśaratha → Śakuni → Karambi→Devarāta→Devakṣatra→Madhu→Kuruvaśa → Puruhotra → Anu I→Āyu→Sātvata.

(4) *SĀTVATAS*

Sātvata→Andhaka I→Kukura→Vahni→Kapotaroman → Viloman → Anu II→Andhaka II→Dundubhi→Aridyota → Punarvasu→Āhuka—Ugrasena→Karna

2. Romapāda's son was Babhru, from whom was born Kṛti. His son was Uśika from whom proceeded (the line of) kings like Caidya and others (i.e. Damaghoṣa etc.)

3. Kratha (the second son of Vidarbha) had a son called Kunti, from whom was born Dhṛṣṭi (Vṛṣṇi) whose son was Nirvṛti (Vidhṛti). From him sprang a son named Daśārha, whose son was Vyoma.

4. His son was Jīmūta whose son was Vikṛti, the father of Bhīmaratha. His son was Navaratha, from whom was born Daśaratha.

5. From his son Śakuni was born Kerambhi from whose loins appeared Devarāta. His son was Devakṣatra. From him was born Madhu, whose son was Kuruvaśa of whom was born Anu.

6-8. Anu's son was Puruhotrā whose son was Āyu from whom Sātvata was born. Sātvata had seven sons—Bhajaṁāna, Bhaji, Dīpta, Vṛṣṇi, Devavṛdha, Andhaka, Mahābhoja, Oh noble king! Bhajaṁāna's sons were Nimloci, Kiṅkiṇi and Dhṛṣṭi, through one wife, while by another wife, he had three sons viz. Śatājit, Sahasrājit and Ayutājit, Oh Lord.

9-11. Babhru was the son of Devāvṛdha in eulogizing whom the following couplet is recited :

(5) *SATVATAS*

Sātvata → Mahābhoja → Bhajaṁāna II → Vidūratha → Śūra I → Śini → Svayambhoja → Hṛdika → Devamīdha → Śūra II → Vasudeva → Kṛṣṇa

(6) *VṚṢṆIS*

Vṛṣṇi I married to Gāndhārī : → Sumitra → Nimna → Satrājit —

Prasena

Bhaṅgakāra → Sabhākṣa.

Vṛṣṇi I married to Mādrī : → Yudhājit → Vṛṣṇi II (Pṛṣṇi)

Śvaphalka

Citraka

Akrūra etc. Pṛthu etc.

Vṛṣṇi I → Devamīdha → Śūra II → Vasudeva → Kṛṣṇa → Sāmba → Vajra.

Vṛṣṇi → Śini II → Satyaka → Yuyudhāna → Jaya → Kuṇi → Asaṅga → Yugandhara.

Vṛṣṇi I — Śini I.

“Just as we hear from far afar, so we see (them) from near. Babhru is the greatest among human beings while Devāvṛdha is just like gods (lit. equal in comparison with gods). Through the spiritual guidance of Babhru and Devāvṛdha fourteen thousand and sixty-five men attained immortality (liberation from *saṁsāra*).”

Mahābhoja (the seventh son of Sātvata) was pious, and religious-minded. Kings born in his family-line were (known as) Bhojas.

12. Vṛṣṇi's son was Sumitra, whose son was Yudhājit, Oh chastiser of enemies. His son was Śini who had Anamitra as his son. From Anamitra appeared Nimna.

13. Satrājit and Prasena were the two sons of Nimna. Another Śini, a son of Anamitra had a son Satyaka.

14. Satyaka's son was Yuyudhāna whose son was Jaya from whom was born Kuṇi. His son was Yugandhara. Anamitra had another son named Vṛṣṇi.

15. Vṛṣṇi had two sons—Śva-phalka and Citraratha. Śva-phalka begot on Gandinī twelve famous sons (in addition to Akrūra), but Akrūra was the foremost of them all.

16-17. (The names of those sons are :) Āsaṅga, Sārameya, Mṛdura, Mṛduvid, Giri, Dharmavṛddha, Sukarmā, Kṣetropekṣa, Arimardana, Śatrughna, Gandhamāda and Prati-bāhu. They had a sister called Sucirā. Akrūra also had two sons—

18. Viz. Devavān and Upadeva. Citraratha had sons such as Pṛthu, Vidūra and many others—all descendants of Vṛṣṇi.

19. Andhaka¹ had four sons : Kukura, Bhajamāna, Śuci and Kambalabarhiṣa. Kukura's son was Vahni, whose son was Viloma.

20. He had a son Kapotaroma whose son was Anu. His friend was Tumbaru (the famous celestial musician. From Anu was born Andhaka, from whom was born Dundubhi. His son was Aridyota, the father of Punarvasu.

21. Punarvasu had a son called Āhuka, and a daugh-

1. On the strength of VP.4.14.12 ŚR gives the name Andhaka, though Bh.P. does not mention his name.

ter named Āhukī. Āhuka's sons were Devaka and Ugrasena. Devaka had four sons :

22. Viz. Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva, Deva-vardhana. They had seven sisters such as Dhṛtadevā and others, Oh King !

23. (In addition to Dhṛtadevā) the sisters were Śāntidevā, Upadevā, Śrīdevā, Devarakṣitā, Sahadevā and Devakī all of whom Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa's father) married.

24. Kaṁsa, Sunāma, Nyagrodha, Kaṅka, Śaṅku, Suhū, Rāṣṭrapāla, Śrṣṭi and Tuṣṭimān were the sons of Ugrasena.

25. The daughters of Ugrasena were Kaṁsā, Kaṁsāvatī, Kaṅkā, Śarabhū, Rāṣṭrapālikā, and they were the wives of Vasudeva's younger brothers.

26. Śūra was born of Vidūratha (the son of Citraratha). His son was Bhajamāna of whom was born Śini. From him was born Svayambhoja whose son was Hṛdika.

27. Hṛdika's sons were Devabāhu, Śatadhanu, and Kṛtavarmā. Śūra (sena) was the son of Devamīḍha (who, as explained by ŚR on the strength of Parāśara i. e. VP to be the fourth son of Hṛdika¹). Māriṣā was Śūra's wife.

28-30. He begot on her ten sons of spotless character viz. Vasudeva, Devabhāga, Devaśravas, Anaka, Sṛñjaya, Śyāmaka, Kaṅka, Śamika, Vatsaka, Vṛka. They call Vasudeva, the father of Hari (lit. the source of Hari's birth), as Ānaka-
dundubhi, as the celestial kettledrums (*dundubhis*) and still bigger drums (Ānakas) were sounded at his (auspicious) birth. And their five sisters Pṛthā, Śrutadevā, Śrutakīrti, Śrutaśravas.

31. And Rājādhīdevī were his five daughters. (Pṛthā's) father Śūra gave her in adoption to his friend Kunti who was childless,

32. From the sage Durvāsas whom she pleased (by her services), she obtained the lore (*mantras*) of invoking gods (*Devahūtī Vidyā*). For testing the efficacy of that lore, she invoked the lustrous sun.

1. The name however does not appear in the text of the VP.4.14.24 in the Gita Press edition. Saṁvat 2026. But ŚR clearly states :

Devamīḍhasya yaḥ Śūro nāma Putras tasya Devamīḍho Hṛdikasyaiva sutas tathā'ha Parāśarah / and quotes VP. 4.14.24 etc.

33. She was astounded to see the (sun)-god appearing instantly in her presence. (Being embarrassed, apologetically) she said, "It is just for testing the efficacy of the lore that the *mantra* was used. Excuse me, Oh god, and (kindly) go your way."

34. 'The sight of gods is never fruitless, Oh lady ! I shall beget a son for you, and see to it that your virginity is unimpaired, Oh girl of beautiful waist !'

35. Assuring her thus, the sun-god impregnated her and returned to the firmament. She instantly gave birth to a son who was (brilliant) like another sun.

36. Being afraid of a public censure, she abandoned him (in a box) in the river. Your really valorous great grandfather Pāṇḍu married her.

37. Vṛddhaśarmā of Kāruṣa dynasty married Śrutadevā of whom was born Dantavakra, one of the Diti's sons (viz. Hiraṇyākṣa) who was formerly attendant of god Viṣṇu, called Vijaya but cursed by the sage (Sanaka).

38. Dhṛṣṭaketu of Kekaya family wedded Śrutakīrti and had five sons in the Kekaya family.

39. Jayasena begot by Rājādhīdevī two sons viz. Vinda and Anuvinda. Damaghoṣa, the king of Cedi, married Śrutaśravā.

40. Śiṣupāla was her (Śrutaśravā's) son. Thus the (account of his) birth is narrated. By Kāṁsā, Devabhāga had two sons, Citraketu and Bṛhadbala.

41. Devaśravas had by Kāṁsavatī two sons—Suvīra and Iṣumān, while Ānaka begot on Kaṅkā (two sons viz.) Satyajit and Purujit.

42. Sṛñjaya procreated from Rāṣṭrapālī, Vṛṣa, Durmarṣaṇa and other sons, while Śyāmaka had Harikeśa and Hiraṇyākṣa by Śūrabhūmī.

43. Vatsaka begot on a celestial nymph Mitrakeśī, Vṛka and other sons, while Vṛka had by his wife Durvākṣī sons such as Takṣa, Puṣkara, Śāla and others.

44. By Sudāminī, Śamīka had Sumitra, Arjunapāla and other sons, while Kaṅka begot on Karṇikā, Rṭadhāman and Jaya. —

45. Ānakadundubhi (Vasudeva) had Pauravī, Rohiṇī, Bhadrā, Madirā, Rocanā, Ilā and Devakī (and others) as wives. Out of them Devakī was prominent.

46. By Rohiṇī, Vasudeva procreated Bala, Gada, Sāraṇa, Durmada, Vipula, Dhruva, as well as Kṛta and others.

47. Vasudeva's sons by Pauravī were Subhadra, Bhadravāha, Durmada, Bhadra as well as others beginning with Bhūta, all together being twelve (in number).

48. Nanda, Upananda, Kṛtaka, Śūra and others were the children of (Vasudeva's wife) Madirā, while Kausalyā gave birth to one son Keśin, the delight of his family.

49. Rocanā bore (to Vasudeva) Hasta, Hemāṅgada and other sons. He begot on Ilā, Uruvalka and other chiefs of Yadus.

50. Ānakadundubhi (Vasudeva) had only one son Vipr̥sthā from Dhṛtadevā, while the sons of Sāntidevā were Śrama, Pratiśruta and others, Oh king !

51. Ten kings beginning with Kalpavarṣa were the sons of Upadevā; while Śridevā had six sons viz. Vasu, Haṁsa, Suvaṁśa and (three) others.

52-53. By Devarakṣitā, he got nine sons such as Gada and others. While he begot eight sons on Sahadevā. Of them, Puruviśruta was most prominent. Just as God Dharma procreated eight Vasus, the noble-minded Vasudeva begot on Devakī eight sons.

54. They were Kīrtimat, Suśeṇa, Bhadrasena, R̥ju, Sammardana, Bhadra and Saṅkarṣaṇa who was Śeṣa, the Lord of Serpents.

55. Their eighth son was verily Lord Hari himself. And the highly fortunate Subhadrā, your grand mother was their daughter, Oh King !

56. Whenever there is deterioration in righteousness and waxing of sinfulness, the glorious Lord Hari incarnates himself.¹

57. Oh King ! No cause except his will-power (*Māyā*) can be attributed for the appearance or deeds of the Lord

1. Cf. *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati Bhārata /
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānam sṛjāmyaham || Bh. GĪTĀ*

who is the all-pervading Lord of the universe, the Supreme-most, detached and impartial Witness.

58. The activity of the Lord through his *Māyā* brings about the birth, continuation and destruction of the *jīva* (an embodied soul). The recession of *Māyā* is his Grace, which leads to self-realization.

59. He endeavoured to lighten the burden of the earth which was being over-run by Asuras in the guise of kings leading Akṣauhiṇīs of army.

60. The glorious Lord Viṣṇu (Slayer of demon Madhu) accompanied by Saṅkarṣaṇa (Balarāma) achieved feats which the Lords of gods could not comprehend, even by thought or imagination.

61. For conferring grace on his devotees, he spread his hallowing glory which will also remove the misery, sorrow and ignorance of those who will be born in (the impending) Kali age.

62. Having but once slightly tasted with the joined palms in the form of ears, from the sacredmost stream of his glory, which is sweet like nectar to the ears of the righteous people, a person shakes himself free from tendencies to *Karmas*.

63-64. Lord Kṛṣṇa whose sportive acts were ever eulogised by (the members of the clans like) Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Madhus, Śūrasenas and Daśārhas as well as Kauravas, Sṛñjayas and Pāṇḍavas, delighted the entire humanity with his affectionate smiles and glances, with his sublime speech and his valorous sportive actions and personality, charming in every respect.

65. Drinking (as it were) with their eyes, his countenance appearing most beautiful with ears ornamented with alligator-shaped ear-rings and with brilliant cheeks, a face beaming with graceful sportive smiles, an eternal seat of ecstasy—men and women¹ steeped in delight, are never satiated but grow angry with Nimi (who causes winking and thus deprives them of their happiness and joy).

1. VC. insists that these were cowherd women of Vṛṇḍāvana and not others, and men were Kṛṣṇa's mates like Subala and quotes *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* as an authority on this.

66. He manifested himself with his own form, but later on assuming the human form, he went from his father's house to Vraja. He enhanced its prosperity. He killed all the enemies; he married a number of wives and begot hundreds of sons through them. He worshipped the Supreme person (who is himself) by performing numerous sacrifices, and promulgated thereby the Vedic path that leads to him, amongst the people.

67. Desiring to reduce the heavy burden of the earth, he struck down with his glance the legions of kings in the battle resulting from the internal feuds of the Kuru clans, but (gave credit of victory to Arjuna) by proclaiming the victory (as if) won by Arjuna; he then enlightened Uddhava in the secrets of the highest Truth, and retired to his Supreme Abode.

